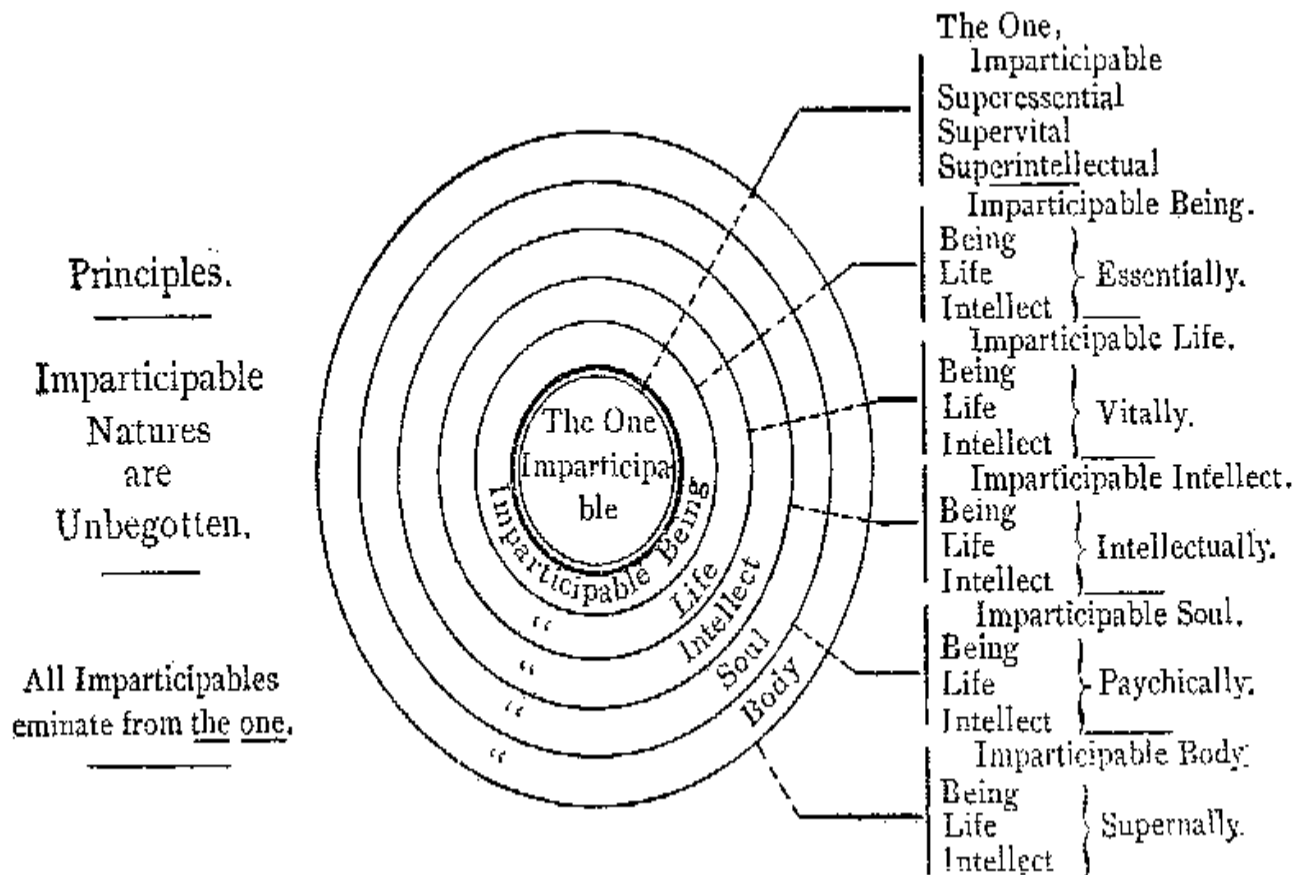


# Proclus: Metaphysical Elements



## Proclus' Metaphysical Elements (Στοιχειωσις θεολογική)

Translated from the Original Greek by

# THOS. M. JOHNSON

Editor of The Platonist

*"Virtuous, therefore, is the man who relieves the corporeal wants of others, who wipes away the tear of sorrow, and gives agony repose; but more virtuous he who, by disseminating wisdom, expels ignorance from the soul, and thus benefits the immortal part of man. For it may indeed be truly said, that he who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men, that he who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes; but that he who knows all that can be known by intellectual energy is a God among men."*

OSCEOLA, MISSOURI, U.S.A.  
1909

TO  
WILLIAM T. HARRIS, LL. D.,  
The Greatest American Thinker,  
who for over fifty years has battled in defense  
of God, Freedom and Immortality, against  
sottish atheists and materialists, this book is dedicated  
as an expression of admiration and friendship.

## Contents

	<u>Introduction...</u>	i
I.	<u>On the One...</u>	1
II.	<u>On Unity...</u>	6
III.	<u>On Producing Causes and Effects...</u>	7
IV.	<u>On the First Good, Which is Called The Good Itself...</u>	8
V.	<u>On The Self-sufficient...</u>	9
VI.	<u>On Cause...</u>	10
VII.	<u>On the Immovable and Self-motive Principle or Cause...</u>	13
VIII.	<u>On an Incorporeal Essence, and What the Characteristic of it is...</u>	14
IX.	<u>That Intellect is not the First Cause...</u>	19
X.	<u>On the Imparticipable...</u>	22
XI.	<u>On the Perfect...</u>	24

XII. <u>On that Which Produces...</u>	25
XIII. <u>On the Perpetual, Demonstrating That the World is Perpetual...</u>	39
XIV. <u>On Eternity and Eternal Natures...</u>	42
XV. <u>On Providence...</u>	88
XVI. <u>On Intellect...</u>	118
XVII. <u>On Soul...</u>	135
<u>Additional Notes and Elucidative Excerpts...</u>	159
<u>Appendix...</u>	198

[i]

## INTRODUCTION.

Proclus, the famous philosopher, mathematician, and poet, came into the world of time and sense on the 8th day of February, A. D. 410, at Byzantium, and migrated from this physical life on April the 17th. 485 A.D.<sup>1</sup> His parents, Patricius and Marcella, were Lycians and of an illustrious family. He was taken immediately after his birth to their native country, to the city of Xanthus, which was consecrated to Apollo. And this happened to him by a certain divine providence: for it was necessary that he who was to be the leader of all sciences should be educated under the presiding Deity of the Muses. He received his elementary education in Lycia, and then went to Alexandria, in Egypt, and became a pupil of Leonas the rhetorician, and Orion the grammarian. He likewise attended the schools of the Roman teachers, and acquired an accurate knowledge of the Latin language. But his tutelar Goddess exhorted him to study philosophy, and to go to the Athenian schools. In obedience to this exhortation he attended the lectures of Olympiodorus, an eminent Peripatetic, in order to learn the doctrine of Aristotle; and he was instructed in mathematical disciplines by Hero. On one occasion, after hearing a lecture by Olympiodorus, a man who was gifted with much eloquence, [ii] and who, by the rapidity of his speech and the depth of his subject was understood by but very few of his auditors, Proclus repeated to his companions the lecture nearly word for word, though the discourse was copious. He comprehended with great facility the writings of Aristotle pertaining to rational philosophy, though the bare reading of them is difficult to those who attempt the task. After learning all that his Alexandrian masters could teach him, he went to Athens accompanied by the Gods who preside over eloquence and philosophy,

1. The following sketch of Proclus is taken almost verbatim from Marinus' Life of his Master. This biography is an admirable production, and gives us much curious and interesting information about the philosophic life of the Successors of Plato. It is unfortunate that Taylor's English version of it is practically inaccessible. (It was printed in 1792.) The original text was edited by Fabricius, Hamburg, 1700, Lond., 1703; by Boissonade, Leip., 1814, and in the Cobet edition of Diogenes Laertius, Paris, 1850; and by Cousin, in his *Procli Opera Inedita*, Paris, 1864.

2. This truly great man appears to have been the first who thoroughly penetrated the profundity contained in the writings of the more ancient philosophers, contemporary with and prior to Plato, and to have demonstrated the admirable agreement of their doctrines with each other. Unfortunately but few of his

and by beneficent daemons. For that he might preserve the genuine and entire succession of Plato, he was brought by the Gods to the city of the guardian (Athene) of Philosophy. Hence Proclus was called by way of preeminence *the Platonic Successor*. At Athens he became the pupil of the first of philosophers, Syrianus,<sup>2</sup> the son of Philoxenus, who not only taught him but made him the companion of his philosophic life, having found him such an auditor and successor as he had a long time sought for, and one who was capable of apprehending a multitude of disciplines and divine dogmas. In less than two years, therefore, Proclus read with Syrianus all the works of Aristotle, viz. his Logic, Ethics, Politics, Physics, and Theological Science. And being sufficiently instructed in these as in certain *proteleia*,<sup>3</sup> i. e., things [iii] preparatory to initiation, and lesser mysteries Syrianus led him to the sacred discipline of Plato, in an orderly progression, and not, according to the Chaldaean Oracle, with a transcendent foot. And he likewise enabled Proclus to survey with him truly divine mysteries, with [iv] the eyes of his soul free from material darkness, and with an undefiled intellectual vision. But Proclus, employing sleepless exercise and attention, both by night and by day, and synoptically and judiciously recording the discourses of Syrianus, made so great a progress in his studies that by the time he was twenty-eight years of age he had composed a multitude of works, among them his Commentary on the *Timæus*, which is truly subtle and full of erudition. But from this course of training his manners became more adorned; and as he advanced in science he increased in virtue. The soul of Proclus, concentrating itself, and retiring into the depth of its essence, departed in a certain respect from body, while it yet appeared to be contained in its dark receptacle. For he possessed a Prudence, not like that of a civil character, which is conversant with the administration of fluctuating particulars, but Prudence itself, by itself pure, which is engaged in contemplating, and converting itself to itself, in nowise agreeing with a corporeal nature. He likewise possessed a Temperance free from the inferior part or body, which is not even moderately influenced by perturbations, but is abstracted from all affections. And, lastly, he acquired a Fortitude, which does not fear a departure from the body. But reason and intellect dominating in him, and the inferior powers of his soul no longer opposing themselves to purifying Justice, his whole life was adorned with the divine irradiations of genuine Virtue.

works are extant. ♦T.

3. Aristotle's philosophy when compared with the discipline of Plato is, I think, deservedly considered in this place as bearing the relation of the *proteleia* to the *epopteia* in sacred mysteries. Now the *proteleia*, i. e., things previous to perfection, belong to the initiated, and the mystics; the former of whom were introduced into some lighter ceremonies only, but the mystics were permitted to be present with certain preliminary and lesser sacred concerns. On the other hand the *epoptaa* were admitted into the sanctuary of the greater sacred rites, and became spectators of the symbols and more interior ceremonies. Aristotle indeed appears to be every where an enemy to the doctrine of ideas, as understood by Plato, though they are doubtless the leading stars of all true philosophy. However the great excellence of his works, considered as an introduction to the divine theology of Plato, deserves the most unbounded commendation. Agreeable to this Damascius informs us that Isidorus the philosopher, "grasped only slightly the rhetorical and poetical arts, but devoted himself to the more divine philosophy of Aristotle. Discovering, however, that this was based more on necessary reasons than intuitive intellect, that the procedure by method was deemed sufficient, and that it

Proclus, having perfected himself in this form of the virtues, advancing as it were by the highest and most mystical step ascended to the greatest and most consummate virtues, being conducted by a prosperous nature and scientific discipline. For being now purified, rising above generation, and despising the wand or thyrsus-bearers in it,<sup>5</sup> he was divinely inspired about the [v] Primal Essences, and became an inspector of the truly blessed spectacles which are in the Intelligible Sphere. It was no longer necessary for him to acquire a knowledge of them by processes of reasoning and demonstrations, but surveying them as it were by direct vision, and beholding by simple intuitions of the thinking power the paradigms in the Divine Intellect, he obtained a virtue which no one would rightly call Prudence, but rather Wisdom, or something even more venerable than this.<sup>6</sup> Proclus therefore energizing according to this virtue easily comprehended all the theology of the Greeks and Barbarians, and that which is adumbrated in mythological fictions, and revealed it to those who are willing and able to understand it. He explained likewise every thing more enthusiastically than others, and brought the different theologies into harmony with each other. At the same time, investigating the writings of the Ancients, whatever he found in them genuine he judiciously adopted, but every thing [vi] of a vain and fruitless character he entirely rejected as erroneous. He likewise strenuously refuted by a diligent examination those doctrines which were contrary to truth. In his associations, too, with others he powerfully and clearly discussed the subjects presented for consideration, and delineated them in his writings. For he was laborious beyond measure: in one day he delivered five and sometimes more lectures, and wrote as many as seven hundred verses.... In the beginning of his forty-second year he appeared to himself to pronounce with a loud voice these verses:

did not entirely employ a divine or intellectual insight, he was but little solicitous about his doctrine. But when he tasted the conceptions of Plato, he did not think it worth while "to look any further," as Pindar says, [Olymp. I. 183.] but expecting to gain his desired end if he could penetrate into the adyta of Plato's thought, he therefore directed to this purpose the whole course of his application. Of the most ancient philosophers, he deified Pythagoras and Plato, believing that they were among those winged souls which in the supercelestial place, in the plain of Truth, and in the meadow there, are nourished by divine ideas." (*Photii Bibliotheca*, p. 337. Vol. II. ed. Bekker.) ♦T.

The form of the foregoing note has been changed somewhat, and the quotation from Damascius extended. This note was written in 1792: Taylor's mature conclusion was that the opposition of Aristotle to the Platonic doctrines, even to that of Ideas, was purely apparent. "He strenuously maintained that Aristotle was not only the pupil but in the strictest sense the holder of the Platonic dogmas; contrary to the ignorant and rash deductions of the moderns, who had never fully comprehended either master or pupil."

5. The narthex (wand or thyrsus) is a symbol of

material and partible  
 fabrication .because it has as  
 it were a false form: for it is  
 wood and not wood. More  
 rightly is it so called on ac-  
 count of its sundered  
 continuity, whence it is  
 likewise a Titanic plant. For  
 they hold it before Dionysus  
 (Bacchus) instead of his  
 paternal sceptre, and through  
 this they call him into a  
 partible nature. Moreover, the  
 Titans are wand or thyrsus-  
 bearers; and Prometheus  
 concealed fire in a reed, by  
 which we may understand  
 either that he draws down  
 celestial light into generation,  
 or leads the soul into body, or  
 calls forth divine illumination,  
 the whole of which is  
 ungenerated, into generation.  
 Hence Socrates Orphically  
 calls the multitude thyrsus-  
 bearers, because they live  
 Titanically. ♦ Olympiodorus:  
*Commentary on the Phædo*, p.  
 96, (ed. Finckh, Heilbron.  
 1847).

6. Doubtless the fashionable  
 philosophasters of this mater-  
 ialistic age will shake their  
 empty heads over the  
 intellectual training of Proclus  
 and brand it as "mystical," but  
 since the opinion of these  
 sapient gentlemen arises from  
 ignorance and incapacity it  
 will not disturb those whose  
 thought ranges beyond the  
 barriers of sense and matter.

7. No opinion is more  
 celebrated than that of the  
 metempsychosis of  
 Pythagoras, but perhaps no  
 doctrine is more generally  
 mistaken. By most of the

Lo! on my soul a sacred fire descends,  
 Whose vivid power the intellect extends;  
 From whence far beaming thro' dull body's night.  
 It soars to æther deck'd with starry light;  
 And with soft murmurs thro the azure round,  
 The lucid regions of the Gods resound.

Moreover, he clearly perceived that he belonged to the Hermetic chain; and was persuaded by a dream that he possessed the soul of Nicomachus the Pythagorean.<sup>7</sup>

Ammonius Hermeias, a genuine Platonist and likewise [vii] one of the best of the Aristotelian commentators, says (Com. De Interpret. Aristot.): "If we are able to add any thing to the elucidation of this book from recollecting the interpretations of our divine teacher, Proclus the Platonic Successor, who possessed the power of unfolding the opinions of the Ancients, and a scientific judgment of the nature of things, in the highest perfection possible to humanity, we shall be very grateful to the God of discourse (Hermes)." Cousin declares (*Procli Opera*, Præfatio Generalis): "Proclus was illustrious as an astronomer; he was the first among the philologists of his age; he had so comprehended all religions in his mind, and regarded them with such equal reverence, [viii] that he was as it were the hierophant of the whole universe: nor was it wonderful that a man possessing such a profound knowledge of nature and science should have this initiation into all sacred mysteries.... As he was the head of the Athenian School and of all later philosophy, so I may affirm that all the earlier is found gathered up in him, and that he may be taken as the one interpreter of the whole philosophy of the Greeks.... I shall set it down as an established fact that nothing great was thought out by Iamblichus, Porphyry, and Plotinus, either in Ethics, Metaphysics, or Physics, which is not found expressed more clearly and methodically in Proclus.... The threefold division of Greek Philosophy may be reduced ultimately to one, which being the same always, by a natural and certain progress enlarges and unfolds itself, and moves on through three stages intimately connected, the first being contained in the second, the second in the third, so that the man who after the lapse of ages finds himself at the end of this gradually evolving series, on the highest apex of that third age, as he embraces all the accumulations of former times in himself, stands as the representative of each sect of Greece, emphatically the Greek philosopher — such a man I say was Proclus, in whom it seems to me are combined and from whom shine forth in no irregular or uncertain rays all the philosophical lights which have illuminated Greece in various times, to wit Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus."

present day it is exploded as ridiculous; and the few who retain some veneration for its founder endeavor to destroy the literal, and to confine it to an allegorical meaning. By some of the ancients this mutation was limited to similar bodies; so that they conceived the human soul might transmigrate into various human bodies, but not into those of brutes. And this was the opinion of Hierocles, as may be seen in his *Commentary on the Golden Verses*. But why may not the human soul become connected with subordinate, as well as with superior lives, by a tendency of inclination? Do not similars love to be united; and is there not in all kinds of life something similar and common? Hence when the affections of the soul verge to a baser nature, while connected with a human body, these affections, on the dissolution of such a body, become enveloped as it were in a brutal nature, and the rational eye in this case clouded with perturbations is oppressed by the irrational energies of the brute, and surveys nothing but the dark phantasms of a degraded imagination. But this doctrine is vindicated by Proclus, with his usual acuteness, In his admirable *Commentaries on the Timæus*, Lib, 5. p. 329, [Vol. III. p. 294. ed. Diehl], as follows: "It is usual to inquire how human souls can descend into brute animals. And some indeed think that there are certain similitudes of men to brutes, which they call brutal

lives: for it is not possible that a rational essence can become the soul of a brute. But others allow that it may be immediately sent into irrational animals, because all souls are of a similar form; so that they may become wolves and leopards and mollusks. But true reason indeed asserts that the human soul may enter into brutes, yet in such a manner that it may retain its own proper life; the soul riding as it were on and bound by sympathy to the brutal nature. And that this is the only mode of insinuation we have proved by a multitude of arguments, in our *Commentaries on the Phædrus*. If however it be requisite to remind the reader that this is the opinion of Plato, we may observe that in his *Republic* he says that the soul of Thersites assumed the nature of an ape, but not the body of an ape; and in the *Phædrus* that the soul descends into a brutal life, but not into a brutal body. For the life is conjoined to its proper soul. And in this place he says that it 'is changed into a brutal nature.' For a brutal nature is not a brutal body, but a brutal life." ♦T.

These eulogies, which may seem extravagant to those who know Proclus, if at all, only through the average historian of Philosophy, are in my deliberate judgment, a judgment formed after a study of many years of the writings of Proclus, based on the truth.

Proclus was unquestionably one of the greatest philosophers of any age or country. His authority was [ix] dominant during his own time: in all subsequent ages, directly and indirectly, he exerted an enormous and far-reaching influence through his writings, especially the *Metaphysical Elements*, which were generally read,

9. *De La Phil. Scol.* 1. 389.



either in the original or in translation. The noted *Liber de Causis*, which was compiled almost textually from the *Metaphysical Elements*, was one of the most famous and widely-circulated books of the medieval ages, and the source of many of the conceptions of the medieval thinkers, Christian and Arabian. It was attributed to Aristotle, and was variously known as *Liber de essentia purae bonitatis*, *De causis causarum*, *De Intelligentiis*, *De Esse*, etc. Jourdain says that the philosophy of the 10th Century cannot be known well, unless the *Liber de Causis* and *Fons Vitae* are analyzed. Renan thought that the *Liber de Causis* holds in germ all the scholastic philosophy. Haureau<sup>9</sup> observes: "Such is the '*Book concerning Causes*,' which has made so great an uproar; which, according to the Church, has ruined so many consciences; which has produced at least so many scandals."

It would be superfluous to enumerate the names of all the thinkers who were nurtured by his philosophic conceptions, but a few may be mentioned. The writings of Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite, which profoundly inspired and influenced Christian thought for many centuries, owe much to Proclus. Generally, and particularly in his treatise *On the Divine Names*, Dionysius borrowed extensively from him. The hierarchies of Dionysius are modelled on the different orders of the "gods" (θεοι) which are divine natures, essences or forces, of varying power and rank.

During the Renaissance Proclus, made known to the Latin world by the translations of divers of his [x] works by William of Moerbeke<sup>10</sup> and Marsilius Ficinus [Ficino], was one of the mighty intellectual forces which emancipated mankind from the shackles of prejudice, bigotry, and ignorance. Later, the writings of Giordano Bruno and Benedict Spinoza show that they drew from Proclus some of their cardinal doctrines.

In Modern times the influence of Proclus has not diminished. Many distinguished scholars and thinkers, though in all cases not directly, have been stimulated or inspired by his thought. Hegel, for instance, studied Proclus deeply, and was largely indebted to him. He gave special attention to the *Elements*, as is evidenced by his correspondence with Creuzer on the text.<sup>11</sup>

10. William of Moerbeke, Archbishop of Corinth, who flourished in the 13th Century, translated from the Greek into Latin several books of Proclus, among which was the *Metaphysical Elements*. He records that he finished his translation of the *Elements* on the 18th. day of May, 1268, at Viterbo, Italy. This is extant in Ms., but has never been printed. A Ms. *Expositio* of the *Elements*, by Brother Berealdus of the Dominican Order, written in 1454, is preserved in the library of Balliol College, Oxford. The Commentary of Thomas Aquinas on the *Liber De Causis* is published in the complete editions of his works. Aquinas knew that this book was an Arabic abstract of the *Metaphysical Elements* of Proclus.

11. Creuzer's edition was dedicated to Hegel and Van Heusde, Cousin dedicated his edition of Proclus' *Commentary on the*

*Parmenides* to Boissonade, Schelling, and Hegel.

If the reader wishes to ascertain what the character of Proclus was *not*, and to get a travesty of his philosophy, he may peruse "Alexandria and Her Schools" by Charles Kingsley, one of the blind leaders of the blind in philosophical science, a gentleman who was in the habit of vilifying whatever he did not understand, and who was no more qualified to explain or criticize what he termed "Neo-Platonism" than an Esquimo [Eskimo].

I first read the Greek text of the *Metaphysical Elements*, ((Στοιχειωσις θεολογικη), in Creuzer's edition, [xi] in the Winter of 1872♦73. At that time many of the Propositions were beyond my full comprehension, but the study of the whole book was to me an intellectual discipline of inestimable value, and the Propositions which I mastered amply repaid all the time and thought expended upon them. In the Spring of 1873 I read Taylor's translation, published in 1792,<sup>12</sup> in connection with the original. His notes illuminated many of the dark places.

12. A second, revised edition appeared in 1816.

In translating the *Metaphysical Elements* I have spent many intensely laborious but very pleasant and extremely profitable hours. The translation is based on Taylor's, but it would be an act of injustice to him to call my version a revision of his, though my indebtedness to him is large, and is cheerfully acknowledged. Many of the Propositions I retranslated entirely, and in the others more or less changes were made, for the sake of perspicuity or by way of correction. Taylor's notes are generally truly illuminative of the subject, and I have reprinted nearly all of them. I am also much indebted to Mr. Thomas Whittaker, whose book, "The Neo-Platonists", may be strongly commended to all students. His abstract of the *Elements* is excellent.

Purely philological notes have been omitted. These rightly belong to an edition of the original text, which some day I may publish. As a rule the text as edited by Creuzer, (Francof. 1822), has been followed, but I have adopted most of the emendations of Taylor, and made a few of my own. The Latin version of Franciscus Patricius, (Ferrar. 1583),<sup>13</sup> is a valuable aid to the interpretation of the original. He undoubtedly used a [xii] much more perfect manuscript than any

13. This is of course a very rare book. It was only in April last that I was able, after a search of many years, to find a copy.

which is now known,

Greek words and quotations are printed without the accents. It is difficult to get them printed correctly, but there is a better reason for dispensing with them: they are practically useless. They "seldom occur in Greek manuscripts before the seventh century" of the Christian era. Accents were invented by Aristophanes of Byzantium about 200 B. C, for the purpose of preserving the true pronunciation of the Hellenic language. This they failed to do: the true pronunciation is lost, beyond recovery. We should remember that *accents were not devised for scholars*.

Probably the best preparation for the apprehension of the *Elements* is a mastery of Plotinus' treatise *On the Three Archical Hypostases of Things*, viz. The Good, Intellect, and Soul. He demonstrates that the Primary Causes can be neither more nor less than these. "But these three are thus denominated, because they are not consubsistent; and they are not consubsistent, because they are essentially different from each other. For, according to Plato, The Good is *superes-sential*; Intellect is an *impartible, immovable essence*; and Soul is a *self-motive essence*, and subsists as a medium between Intellect and the nature which is distributed about bodies." The chief aim of Proclus in the *Elements* is to demonstrate and develop this Platonic insight. The work "contains two hundred and eleven propositions, disposed in a scientific order, and supported by the firmest demonstrations. They begin from super-essential unity, and proceed gradually through all the beautiful and wonderful progressions of divine causes, ending in the self-moving energies of soul. They possess all the accuracy of Euclid, and all the subtilty and sublimity necessary to a knowledge of the most profound theology, and may be considered as bearing [*xiii*] the same relation to the Pythagoric and Platonic wisdom as Euclid's *Elements* to the most abstruse geometry."

Mr. D. E. Wagenhals, of Nashville, Ills., has ingeniously and admirably illustrated the Propositions of the *Metaphysical Elements* by geometrical diagrams — a work which I heartily hope will soon be given to the public. These diagrams will much facilitate the student's apprehension of the *Elements*. In an Appendix, two specimens of these diagrams are presented, by the kindness of Mr. Wagenhals.

At the request of friends, a few notes of personal intellectual history are here given. My introduction to the so-called Neo-Platonic philosophy was on a day in the Spring of 1870 when, roaming around the Library of the University of Notre Dame,<sup>14</sup> Indiana, seeking any book of interest, especially of a classical nature, I found half a dozen dust covered volumes of the old Classical Journal, (published in London, 1810–1829).

How these volumes ever gained entrance into the Library, I have often wondered. Be that as it may, there they were, and the first article I saw when I opened one of them was the *Chaldaean Oracles*,<sup>15</sup> edited, translated and annotated by the famous Thomas Taylor the Platonist. (Taylor shows that the Chaldaean and Platonic teachings on important points were identical). There were other translations and papers by Taylor, and through them I discovered the existence of the mighty thinkers, the genuine disciples of Plato.

[xiv]

In the latter part of August, 1870,<sup>16</sup> on my way to the University, I purchased in St. Louis the April No., 1869, of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy, which contains the *Sentences of Porphyry*, translated by my friend, the late Prof. Thomas Davidson. My attention had been called to it by a press notice giving the contents of this particular number.

In December, 1870, I procured the original text of the writings of Plotinus, (2 vols., ed. by Adolph Kirchhoff, Lips., 1856). Later I procured the Paris edition, (1855), which has Prolegomena and the Latin version of Marsilius Ficinus [Ficino].<sup>17</sup> In 1871 I picked up Taylor's version of the *Select Works of Plotinus*, (London, 1817), which is excellent, though almost as concise as the original, and is enriched with useful notes and an Introduction profoundly interesting and valuable. But I soon found that it was an Herculean task to reach the insights of Plotinus. I had a fair mastery of the language, but to apprehend his Thought was very difficult. But I persevered. The gathering of Platonic knowledge, if a matter of constant toil and

14. Then and now the principal Catholic University in America.

15. The last edition of the *Chaldaean Oracles* is by Kroll, (Breslau, 1894). It is philologically good, but philosophically worthless.

16. In June of this year I read Emerson's works, (2 vols., 1869), and his magnificent eulogy at the end of his essay on Intellect on the *Trismegisti*, among whom he ranks the "Neo-Platonists," impressed me greatly. It is somewhat curious that my first knowledge of Emerson came through a hostile review in the Catholic World of this very edition. Emerson is one of the best stimulants to the study of Philosophy, of which I know.

17. Several years ago I was fortunate to secure a copy of the first edition of Ficinus' translation, which appeared at Florence, Italy, in the month of May, 1492, folio. It is a magnificent specimen of typography. The type is large and elegant, the paper is of a superior quality, the margins are wide, and the printing is fine — it will indeed compare favorably with that of the present time. The publication

activity, was [xv] equally a matter of perpetual delight and profit. My appetite for Wisdom was immeasurably stimulated, and it is still insatiably strong. And thus gradually I was able to recall a knowledge of the wonderful and marvelous Philosophy, of which Plato is the chief exponent — the Philosophy whose principles will never become obsolete, for they are "the same yesterday, and to day, and forever": the Philosophy which, as Proclus truly says, "came to mankind for the benefit of terrestrial souls, in lieu of statues, temples, and the whole of sacred institutions; and which is the leader of intellectual salvation alike to the men that, now are and to those who shall come hereafter." True, I knew something of Plato, even before this, I had read several of his works in a wretched English version,<sup>18</sup> and the *Apology* and *Crito* in the Greek, but my "knowledge" was [xvi] merely superficial. I had never until now found the key which would admit me into the penetralia of his Thought. But when I read Taylor and Plotinus, then indeed was the darkness of ignorance dispersed — then I could truly say,

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

By an indefatigable study of the Platonic text, with these and others of the Golden Chain of the Platonic Succession as guides, I was enabled to find and travel the way to the divine Ideas of Plato. The way was not easy, for

"The path by which to deity we climb  
Is arduous, rough, ineffable, sublime,"

but every step taken was an encouragement to proceed, by reason of the gain of new insights and a continuous accession of intellectual power.

of this work opened to mankind a new intellectual world, just as the discovery of America by Columbus in the same year opened a new physical world.

18. A childish performance, translated from the French of Dacier, by "several Hands," (London, 1701). It passed through six or seven editions, however, in spite of or on account of its worthlessness. The "several Hands" apparently conspired to make this production stale, flat, and unprofitable. All the intellectual vitality, force, and energy of the Platonic text disappear in this version, and the thought evaporates into persiflage.

Of the three English versions of Plato's complete writings, Taylor's is the best, despite some verbal imperfections and infelicities. He knew more Plato, if others knew more Greek. The Bohn translation is largely a piece of hack-work, done to order: it is purely verbal. The translators criticize Taylor severely, but are under deep obligations to him, and inmost of the difficult passages adopt his renderings! Jowett's version is popular, and is highly esteemed by many. Three editions of it have appeared. In the second and third numerous changes were made. Jowett aimed to make his work better, but his efforts were confined chiefly to the improvement of his style. In his anxiety to turn polished

Greek into polished English, he often allowed the force and thought of Plato to escape him. The Platonic style is characteristic of the Greek, and is untranslatable, either into English or any other language. Still, Jowett doubtless expresses as much of the Platonic thought as the average reader will or can assimilate.

The Platonic are the only writings to which I can return, in health or in sickness, without satiety, fatigue, or dissatisfaction. It matters not how often I open these golden books, I find thoughts and ideas which lift me above the sordid and material cares of life, and which are a perennial consolation and a refuge. These ideas are primarily in the noumenal world, and our apprehension and participation of them here, in the region of time and space, is a foretaste of a perfect participation hereafter, if we qualify ourselves for such an exalted intellectual experience.

THOS. M. JOHNSON,

Osceola, Mo., U. S. A. October, 1909.

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[1]

## Proclus' Metaphysical Elements

### On The One

#### PROPOSITION I.

**Every multitude partakes in some respect of The One.**

For if it in no way or degree participates of The One, neither will the whole be one, nor each of the many things from which multitude arises, but each multitude will originate from certain or particular things, and this

1. Proclus understands by multitude or number everything which is mixed, compounded, or in any respect non-simple — in brief, all things other than the Supreme One. It has been shown that all things partake in some degree of oneness. By virtue of this participation every number or individual thing is at the same time one and non-one — one through participation or communion but not one essentially, because in this case it would be One itself, and not merely a participant of it. So far as any individual or thing

will continue *ad infinitum*. And of these infinities each will be again infinite multitude. For, if multitude partakes in no respect of any one, neither as a whole nor through any of its parts, it will be in every respect indeterminate. Each of the many, whichever you may assume, will be one or not one; and if not one will be either many or nothing. But if each of the many is nothing, that likewise which arises from these will be nothing. If each is many, each will consist of infinities without limit. But this is impossible. For there is no being constituted of infinities without limit, since there is nothing greater than the infinite itself; and that which consists of all is greater than each particular thing. Neither is any thing composed of nothing. Every multitude therefore partakes in some respect of The One.<sup>1</sup>

departs from its primal abiding with the Supreme Unity, so far it becomes multiplied or compounded: it becomes one or returns to its original abode exactly to the degree that it rids itself of multiplicity or everything alien to its true nature.

The orders of multitude are three: (1) Primary, consisting of unities; (2) Composite, consisting of things united; (3) Simple, consisting of the last of things.

"There exist no more beautiful lines in English poetry than the following, taken from the "Adonais," lines in which the whole system of Plotinus [and Proclus] is summed up in exquisite words:

The One remains, the many change and pass,  
Heaven's light forever shines,  
Earth's shadows fly;  
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity." Kuhns: *The Sense of the Infinite*.

## PROPOSITION II.

**Every thing which partakes of The One is alike one and not one.**

For though it is not The One itself — since it participates of The One and is therefore other than it is — it experiences [2] The One through participation, and is thus able to become one. If therefore it is nothing besides The One, it is one alone, and will not participate of The One but will be The One itself. But if it is something other than The One, which is not The One but a participant of it, it is alike one and non-one, — one being, indeed, since it partakes of oneness, but

not oneness itself. This therefore is neither The One itself, nor that which The One is. But, since it is one and at the same time a participant of The One, and on this account not one *per se*, it is alike one and not one, because it is something other than The One. And so far as it is multiplied it is not one; and so far as it experiences a privation of number or multitude it is one. Every thing, therefore, which participates of The One is alike one and not one.

[3]

### **PROPOSITION III.**

**Every thing which becomes one, becomes so by the participation of The One, and is one so far as it experiences the participation of The One.**

For if the things which are not one become one, they doubtless become so by a harmonious alliance and association with each other, and experience the presence of The One, though they are not that which The One is. Hence they participate of The One, so far as they allow themselves to become one. But if they are already one, they will not become one: for that which is, does not become that which it already is. But if they become one from that which was previously not one, they will possess The One, since a certain one was ingenerated in their nature. [And this ingenerated one must be derived from The One itself. Everything, therefore, which becomes one, becomes so by the participation of The One, etc.]

### **PROPOSITION IV.**

**Every thing which is united is different from The One itself.**

For if it is united it will participate in a certain respect of The One, so far as it is rightly said to be united. That, however, which is a participant of The One is both one and not one. But The One itself is not both one and not one: for if this was so, again the one which is in it would have both of these, and this would take place *ad infinitum*, if there was no One itself at which it is possible to stop; but every thing being one and not one, there will be something united, which is different from The One. For if The One is the same as the united, it will be infinite multitude. And in a similar manner each of the things of which the united [4]



consists will be infinite multitude. Every thing, therefore, which is united is different from The One itself.

## PROPOSITION V.

### All multitude is posterior to The One.

For if multitude is prior to The One, The One indeed will participate of multitude, but multitude which is prior will not participate of The One, since prior to the existence of The One that multitude was. For it does not participate of that which is not: because a participant of The One is one and at the same time not one — but, on the hypothesis, The One will not yet subsist, that which is first being multitude. But it is impossible that there should be a certain multitude which in no respect whatever participates of The One. Multitude, therefore, is not prior to The One. But if multitude and The One subsist simultaneously, they will be naturally co-ordinate with each other, and intimately related. Nothing in time prohibits this, since neither is The One essentially many, nor is multitude The One, because they are directly opposite to each other by nature, if neither is prior or posterior to the other. Hence multitude essentially will not be one, and each of the things which are in it will not be one, and this will be the case to infinity, which is impossible. Multitude, therefore, according to its own nature participates of The One, and there is no thing of it which is not one. For if it is not one it will be an infinite, consisting of infinites, as has been demonstrated. Hence it entirely participates of The One. If therefore The One, which is essentially one, in no possible respect participates of multitude, multitude will be wholly posterior to The One — participating indeed of The One, but not being participated by it. But if The One participates of multitude, subsisting indeed as one according to its essence, [5] but as not one according to participation, The One will be multitude, just as multitude is united by reason of The One. The One therefore will communicate with multitude, and multitude with The One.<sup>2</sup> But things which coalesce and communicate with each other in a certain respect, if they are impelled together by another, *that* is prior to them: but if they themselves harmonize they are not antagonistic to each other. For opposites do not hasten to each other. If therefore The One and [6] multitude are oppositely divided, and multitude so far as it is multitude is not one, and The One so far as it is one is not multitude, neither will one of these subsisting in the other be one and at the same

2. It is a fundamental principle of the Platonic Philosophy that all things primarily proceed from, and depend on, One First Cause. It necessarily follows from this principle that One precedes Many; or, in other words, that pure, simple being is prior to the compound or multiplied. Every being, other than the First, is to a greater or less degree a number or multitude. Every number or individual thing must in some respect participate of primal oneness — otherwise it could not exist as a whole, nor in each of its parts. In brief, Oneness is absolutely essential to the individual existence of every being or thing. "All beings are beings through The One, both such as are primarily beings, and such as in any respect whatever are said to be classed in the order of beings. What indeed would they be, if they were not one? Truly, if deprived of oneness, they are no longer that which they were said to be. Neither would an army or a choir or a herd exist, as such, unless each of them was one. But neither would a house or a ship have an existence, unless they possessed The One; since a house is one thing, and also a ship, which one if they lose the house will no longer be a house, nor the ship a ship. Continued magnitudes, therefore, unless The One is present in them, will not exist. Hence when they are divided, so far as

time two. And if there is something prior to them, which impells them to harmonize, this will be either one or not one. But if it is not one, it will be either many or nothing. But neither will it be many, lest multitude should be prior to The One, nor will it be nothing. For how could nothing impell together those things which are something or many? It is therefore one alone. For this one is not many, lest there should be a progression to infinity. It is therefore The One itself, and all multitude proceeds from The One itself.

they lose The One they change their existence. The bodies, also, of plants and animals, each of which is one, if they fly from The One, thereby becoming dissipated into multitude, will lose the essence which they before possessed, no longer being that which they were, but becoming other things, and continuing to be these so long as they are one. Health, likewise, subsists when the body is congregated into one, [i. e. when it possesses symmetry], and beauty flourishes when the nature of The One confines the parts of the body. And Virtue reigns in the soul when the soul tends to unity, and is united in one concord." -Plotinus: En. VI. Lib. 9.1.

## On Unity.

### PROPOSITION VI.

**Every multitude consists either of things united, or of unities.**

It is evident that each of things many will not be itself multitude alone, and, again, that each part of this will not be multitude alone. But if it is not multitude alone, it is either united or unities. And if indeed it partakes of The One it is united; but if it consists of things of which that which is primarily united consists, it will be unities. For if The One itself exists, there is also that which primarily participates of it, and which is primarily united. But this consists of unities: for if it consists of things united, again, things united consist of certain things, and this will be the case to infinity. It is necessary, however, that what is primarily united should consist of unities. And thus we have discovered what we proposed at first, [viz. that every multitude consists either of things united, or of unities.] [7]

## **On Producing Causes and Effects.**

### **PROPOSITION VII.**

**Every thing productive of another is better than the nature of that which is produced.**

For it is either superior, or inferior, or equal. Hence that which is produced from this has itself either a power productive of something else, or it is entirely unprolific. But if it is unprolific, by reason of this fact it will be inferior to and unequal to its producer, which is prolific, and has the power of producing. But if it is productive of other things, it either produces that which is equal to itself, and this similarly in all things, and all beings will be equal to each other, and no one thing will be better than another, that which produces always generating that which is equal to itself, in a consequent series; or it produces that which is unequal to itself, and thus that which is produced will no longer be equal to its producer. For it is the province of equal powers to produce equal things: the progeny of these, however, will be unequal to each other, if that which produces indeed is equal to the cause prior to itself, but the thing posterior to it is unequal to it. Hence it is not right that the thing produced should be equal to its producing cause. Moreover, neither will that which produces ever be less than that which is produced by it. For if it imparts essence to the thing produced, it will also supply it with essential power. And if it is productive of all the power which that posterior to itself possesses, it will certainly be able to make itself such as its production is. But if this be so, it will also make itself more powerful; impotency cannot hinder, the productive power being present, nor a defect of will, — since all things naturally desire the good. Hence, if it is able to render another thing more perfect, it will also perfect itself before it perfects [8] that which is posterior to itself. The thing produced, therefore, is neither equal to nor better than its producing cause: and hence the producing cause is in every respect better than the nature of the thing produced.

## **On the First Good, Which is Called The Good Itself.**

### **PROPOSITION VIII.**

**That which is primarily good, and which is no other than The Good itself, is superior to all things which in any way whatever participate of good.**

For if all beings desire good, it is evident that the Primary Good is beyond beings. If it is the same with a certain one of beings, either being and The Good are the same, and this particular being will no longer desire good, since it is The Good itself — for that which desires anything is indigent of that which it desires, and is different from it — or, being is one thing, and the good another. And if some one being and The Good are the same, being indeed will participate, and that which is participated in being will be The Good. Hence, on this hypothesis, The Good is a certain good inherent in a certain participant and which the participant alone desires, but is not that which is simply good, and which all things desire: for this Good is the common object of desire to all beings. But that which is inherent in a certain thing pertains to that alone which participates of it. Hence that which is primarily good is nothing else than The Good itself. The adding of any thing else to The Good is to diminish it by the addition, making it a certain or particular good instead of that which is simply good. For the addition, since it is not The Good but something less than it, will by its association diminish The Good. [9]

## **On The Self-sufficient.**

### **PROPOSITION IX.**

**Every thing which is self-sufficient, either according to essence or energy, is better than that which is not self-sufficient, and depends on another cause for its perfection.**

For if all beings naturally desire good, and one thing supplies well-being from itself, but another is indigent of something else, the one indeed will have the cause of good present, but the other separate and apart. To the degree, therefore, that the former is nearer to that which supplies the object of desire, to that extent will it be superior to that which is indigent of a separate cause, and which externally receives the perfection of its nature or its energy. For since the self-sufficient is both similar and diminished, it is more similar to The Good itself [than that which is not self-sufficient]. It is diminished indeed by participating of The Good, and

because it is not primarily The Good, though it is allied to it in a certain respect so far as it is able to possess good of and from itself. But to participate good, and to participate through another, are more remote from that which is primarily good, and which is nothing else than good.

## PROPOSITION X.

**Every thing which is self-sufficient is inferior to that which is simply good.**

For what else is the self-sufficient than that which from and in itself possesses good? But this is now full of good, and participates of it, but is not that which is simply good: for *that* is better than participation and plenitude, as has been demonstrated. If therefore the self-sufficient fills itself with good, that from which it [10] fills itself will be better than the self-sufficient, and will be superior to self-sufficiency. And that which is simply good will not be indigent of any thing: for it does not desire any thing else, since the desiring would indicate a deficiency. Nor is the simply good self-sufficient, for in that case it would be full of good, but not that which is primarily The Good.<sup>3</sup>

3. "For Intellect subsists after The First, and is indigent of nourishment and intelligence, being proximate to that nature which is indigent of nothing, not even intelligence (thought). Intellect, however, has true plenitude and thought, because it has these primarily: but that which is prior to Intellect and these neither needs nor has, otherwise it would not be The Good itself." ♦ Plotinus: En. III. Lib, viii. 11.

## On Cause.

## PROPOSITION XI.

**All beings proceed from One First Cause.**

For either there is no cause of any being, or the causes of all finite things revolve in a circle, or the ascent (progression) is to infinity, and one thing is the cause of another, and the presubsistence of essence (cause) will in no respect cease. If, however, there is no cause of beings, there will be neither an order of things second and first, of things perfecting and perfected, of things adorning and adorned, of things generating and generated, and of agents and patients, nor will there be any science of beings. For the knowledge of causes is the work of science, and we are then said to know scientifically when we know the causes of things. But if causes revolve in a circle, the same things will be prior and posterior, more powerful and more imbecile. For every thing which produces is better than the nature of that which is produced. Nor does it make a difference to conjoin cause to effect, and through many or [11] fewer media to produce from cause. For cause

will be superior to all the intermediate natures of which it is the cause; and the more numerous the media the greater is the causality of the cause.

And if the addition of causes is to infinity, and there is always again a cause prior to another, there will be no science of any being: for there is not a knowledge of any thing infinite. But causes being unknown, neither will there be a science of the things consequent to the causes. If, therefore, it is necessary that there should be a cause of beings, and causes are distinct from the things caused, and there is not an ascent to infinity, there is a First Cause of beings, from which as from a root every thing proceeds, ♦ some things indeed being nearer to but others more remote from it. The necessity of the existence of One Principle has been demonstrated, because all multitude is secondary to The One.

## **PROPOSITION XII.**

### **The Principle and First Cause of all beings is The Good Itself.**

For if all things proceed from one cause, [as has been demonstrated], it is necessary to call that cause either The Good, or that which is better than The Good. But if it is better than The Good, is any thing imparted by it to beings, and to the nature of beings, or nothing? And if nothing is imparted by it, an absurdity will result. For we would no longer rank it in the order of causes, since it is everywhere necessary that something should be present from cause to the things caused, and especially from the First Cause, on which all things depend, and by reason of which every being exists. But if something is imparted by it, in the same manner as there is by The Good, there will be something better than goodness in beings, emanating from the First Cause. [12]

For if it is better than and above The Good it will in no way bestow on secondary natures any thing inferior to that which is imparted by the nature posterior to itself. But what can be greater than goodness? Since that which is better than other things is so called because it is a participant to a greater degree of the good. Hence if the not good cannot be said to be better than The Good, it must be entirely secondary to it. If, too, all beings desire The Good how is it possible that there should be any thing prior to this cause? For if they also

desire that which is prior to The Good, how can they specially desire The Good? But if they do not desire it, how is it possible that they should not desire the cause of all, since they proceed from it? If therefore The Good is that on which all beings depend, The Good is the Principle and First Cause of all things.

### **PROPOSITION XIII.**

**Every good has the power of uniting its participants, and every union is good; and The Good is the same as The One.**

For if The Good is preservative of all beings — by reason of which it is desirable to all things — that indeed which is preservative and connective of the essence of every thing is The One. For by The One all things are preserved, but dispersion expells every thing from its essence. If this be the case, The Good will cause those things to which it is present to be one, and will connect and contain them through union. And if The One is collective and connective of beings, it will perfect each of them by its presence. The union therefore which unites a thing with all is a good. But if union is a good per se, and Good itself has a unifying power, that which is simply good and simply one are the same, causing beings to be both good and one. Hence those things which in a certain way or respect fall off from The Good, [13] at the same time lose the participation of The One. And those things which become destitute of The One, being filled with separation, are equally deprived of The Good. Goodness therefore is union, and union is goodness, and The Good itself is one, and The One is that which is primarily Good.<sup>4</sup>

4. "The Good is that on which all depends, and which all things desire and have as a principle, and of which they are all indigent, while The Good itself lacks absolutely nothing, is wholly self-sufficient, and is the measure and limit of all; producing of itself intellect, essence, soul, life and intellectual energy." Plotinus: En. I. Lib. 8. 10.

## **On the Immovable and Self-motive Principle or Cause.**

### **PROPOSITION XIV.**

**Every being is either immovable or moved. And if moved, it is either moved by itself, or by another: and if it is moved by itself it is self-motive, but if by another it is alter-motive. Every nature, therefore, is either immovable, self-motive, or alter-motive.**

5. Axiom 1.: "All things are either in themselves or in others." Axiom 2.: "That which cannot be conceived as through another must be conceived as through itself."

◆ Spinoza.

For it is necessary, since there are alter-motive natures, that there also should be that which is immovable, and

the self-motive nature, which is a medium between them. For if every alter-motive thing is moved because it is moved by another, motions will be either in a circle, or they will proceed to infinity. But neither will they be in a circle, nor proceed ad infinitum, since all beings are limited by the Principle of things, and that which moves is better than that which is moved. Hence there will be something immovable, which first moves. But if this be so, it is necessary that the self-motive exist. For if all things should stop, what will that be which is first moved? It cannot be the immovable, for this is not naturally adapted to be moved; nor the alter-motive, [14] for that is moved by another. It remains, therefore, that the self-motive nature is that which is primarily moved. It is this, too, which unites alter-motive natures to that which is immovable, being in a certain respect a medium, moving and at the same time being moved: for of these, the immovable moves only, but the alter-motive is moved only. Every thing, therefore, is either immovable, or self-motive, or alter-motive.

Corollary.— From the premises, therefore, it is evident, that of things which are moved, the self-motive nature is the first; but that of things which move other things the immovable is the first.<sup>5</sup>

## On an Incorporeal Essence, and What the Characteristic of it is.

### PROPOSITION XV.

**Every thing which is able to return to itself is incorporeal.**

For no body is, by reason of its nature, competent to return to itself. For if that which is converted to anything is conjoined with that to which it is converted, it is evident that all the parts of the body which is converted to itself will be conjoined with all the parts. For a thing is converted to itself, when both that which is converted, and that to which it is converted, become one. This however is impossible in body, and, in short, in all partible things. For the whole of that which is partible is not conjoined with the whole, on account of the separation of its parts, which lie outside one another. No body, therefore, is naturally able to return to itself, so that the whole may be converted to the whole. Hence, [15] if there is

6. There is no more important or significant word in the Platonic vocabulary than *επιστροφή, επιστρεφειν* (a conversion, a turning back, a return to self). It is comprehensive more or less of self-activity, self-development, self-determination, self-knowledge, self-reflection, self-relation, self-consciousness. It is essentially self-reflection or self-relation.

"Great stress is laid on self-relation (*επιστρεφειν*) as the form of the highest order of being; and this is what Hegel's school of philosophy lay so much stress upon, as the doctrine of "return-to-self." It is the form of



anything which has the power of returning to itself, it is incorporeal and impartible.<sup>6</sup>

consciousness, and life, and moral habit; and its image is found in the Cosmos in the shape of orbital movement, diurnal revolution, recurrence of seasons, etc. The external image of this return-to-self-through-other has given the forms of speech in all languages for what is divine, and hence the sun-myth and other astronomical scaffolding of mythologies."

◆ Dr. Harris. (Memoir of A. Bronson Alcott, by F. B. Sanborn and William T. Harris. This is one of the most interesting and valuable biographies in the English language.)

"The Intellect sees because it is turned back to its origin, the One; its movement is circular, i. e. reflexive, or turned back upon itself, conscious." ◆ Plotinus: En. V. Lib. I. ch 7. "For there are two orders of knowing, (Plotinus, En. V. Lib. 6.), — self-knowing and the knowing of something different from the self. Self-knowing is the primary or highest act of the Intellect, — that whereby it returns to its source, the One." ◆ Dr. Harris.

Nothing really exists which is not self-determined and self-related, — which has not a self which it maintains through all its changes."

◆ Hegel.

## PROPOSITION XVI.

**Every thing which is able to return to itself has an essence separate from every body.**

For unless it was separate from every body whatsoever, it would not have a certain activity or act apart from body: since it is impossible that, the essence being inseparable from body, an activity (act) proceeding from essence (body) should be separate. For in this case its activity would be better than its essence, because the [16] latter indeed would be indigent of bodies, but the former unindigent and self-sufficient. If therefore any thing is inseparable in essence from body, it is similarly inseparable in activity (act), — or, rather, it is much more inseparable. But if this be so, it will not return to itself: for that which returns to itself, being something other than body, has an activity separate from body, and which is not either through or with body, since the activity, and that to which the activity is directed, are not at all indigent of body: hence that which returns to itself is wholly separate from bodies.

### **PROPOSITION XVII.**

**Every thing which moves itself primarily,<sup>7</sup> is able to return to itself.**

For if it moves itself, and its motive energy is directed to itself, that which moves and that which is moved are at the same time one. For it either moves in a part or is moved in a part, or the whole moves and is moved, or the whole moves, but a part is moved, or the contrary. But if one part, indeed, is that which moves, and another part is that which is moved, it will not be essentially self-motive, since it will consist of things which are not self-motive, but which appear indeed to be so, yet are not so essentially.

If, however, the whole moves, but the part is moved, or the contrary, there will be a certain part in each which in one and the same subject moves and at the same time is moved.<sup>8</sup> And this is that which is primarily self-motive. If, however, one and the same thing moves and is moved, it will have the energy of moving [17] to and within itself, being motive of itself. But it returns to that toward which it energizes. Every thing, therefore, which primarily moves itself, is able to return to itself.

7. Or, is primarily self-active.

8. For if the whole moves, the part which is moved will at the same time be motive. ♦T.

## PROPOSITION XVIII.

**Every thing which imparts being to others is itself primarily that which it communicates to other natures.**

For if it gives being, and makes the impartance from its own essence, that which it gives is subordinate to its own essence,<sup>9</sup> which is truly greater and more perfect, since every nature which is able to constitute any thing is better than that which is constituted by it ♦ hence the giver is essentially superior to that which is given, but is not the same with it, for the one exists primarily, but the other secondarily. For it is necessary that either each should be the same, and that there should be one reason and definition of each, or that there should be nothing common and the same in each, or that the one should subsist primarily, but the other secondarily. If, however, there is the same reason and definition of each, the one will no longer be cause, but the other effect; nor will the one subsist essentially, but the other in a participant; nor will the one be the maker, but the other the thing made. But if they have nothing which is the same, the one will not constitute the other from its very being, because in that case it imparts nothing. Hence it follows that the one which gives is primary, but that the other to which existence is given is secondary; the former supplying the latter from its very being.

9. See the 7th Proposition.

[18]

## PROPOSITION XIX.

**Every thing which is primarily inherent in a certain nature of beings is present to all the beings which are arranged according to that nature, conformably to one reason, and in the same manner.**

For unless it was present to all of them in the same manner, but present to some and not to others, it is evident that it would not be primarily in that nature, but in some things primarily, and in others secondarily, which sometimes participate of it. For that which at one time exists, but at another time does not, does not exist primarily, nor of itself: but it is adventitious, and comes from some other place to the things in which it is thus inherent.

## PROPOSITION XX.

**The essence of soul is beyond all bodies, the intellectual nature is beyond all souls, and The One is beyond, all intellectual hypostases.**

For every body is movable by another, but is not naturally competent to move itself, but by the presence of soul it is moved of itself, lives through soul, and, when soul is present is in a certain respect self-movable, but when it is absent is alter-movable, because any self-movable nature which it may have it receives from soul, which is allotted a self-movable essence: since, to whatever nature soul is present, to this it imparts self-motion. Soul is, however, by a much greater priority that which it imparts by its very being. Hence it is beyond bodies, which become self-movable by participation, because it is essentially self-movable. Again, however, soul which is moved from itself has an order secondary to the immovable nature, which subsists immovable, in activity or energy. Because of all the natures that are moved, the self-movable essence is the leader; but of all that [19] move, the immovable is the leader. If, therefore, soul, being moved from itself moves other things, it is necessary that prior to it there should be that which moves immovably. But intellect moves, being immovable, and energizing always in the same manner. For soul through intellect participates of perpetual thought, just as body through soul possesses the power of moving itself. For if perpetual intellection or thinking was primarily in soul, it would be inherent in all souls, in the same manner as the self-motive power. Hence perpetual thinking is not primarily in soul. It is necessary, therefore, that prior to it there should be that which is primarily intelligent: and hence intellect is prior to souls.

Moreover, *The One* is prior to intellect. For intellect, though it is immovable, yet is not *The One*; for it thinks itself, and energizes about itself. And of *The One* indeed all beings, in whatever way they may exist, participate; but all beings do not participate of intellect. For those beings to whom intellect is present by participation necessarily participate of knowledge; because intellectual knowledge is the principle and first cause of gnostic energy. *The One*, therefore, is beyond intellect, nor is there anything beyond *The One*: for *The One* and *The Good* are the same. But *The Good*, as has been demonstrated, is the principle of all

things.

## **That Intellect is not the First Cause.**

### **PROPOSITION XXI.**

**Every order, beginning from a monad, proceeds into a multitude co-ordinate to the monad, and the multitude of every order is referred to one monad.**

For the monad, having the relation of a principle, generates a multitude allied to itself. Hence one causal chain and one whole order has a decrement into multitude [20] from the monad. For there would no longer be an order, or a chain, if the monad remained of itself un-prolific. But multitude is again referred to the one common cause of all coordinate natures. For that in every multitude which is the same has not its progression from one of those things of which the multitude consists. For that which subsists from one alone of the many is not common to all, but eminently possesses the peculiarity of that one alone. Hence, since in every order there is a certain communion, connection, and sameness, through which some things are said to be coordinate, but others of a different order, it is evident that sameness comes to every order from one principle.<sup>10</sup> In each order, therefore there is one monad prior to the multitude, which imparts one ratio and connection to the natures arranged in it, both to each other and to the whole.

10. See Additional Notes.

For let one thing be the cause of another, among things that are under the same causal chain or series; but that which ranks as the cause of the one series must necessarily be prior to all in that series, and all things must be generated by it as coordinate, not so that each will be a certain particular thing, but that each will belong to this order.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that both one and multitude are inherent in the nature of body; that nature has many natures co-dependent on it; and that many natures proceed from the one nature of the universe. Further, that the order of souls originates from one first soul, proceeds with diminution into the multitude of souls, and reduces multitude into one; that in the intellectual essence there is an intellectual monad, and a multitude of intellects proceeding from

11. This will be evident by considering that The One, or the First Principle of all, must produce that which first proceeds from himself by union. And as his first production must be the most similar of all things to himself, and must be at the same time multitude, — or in what respect would it differ from The One — hence it is necessary that this progression be no other than self-perfect unities. In consequence thereof of this sublime doctrine, as Proclus

one intellect, and returning to it; that there is a multitude of [21] unities in The One which is prior to all things; and that in these unities there is a striving for *The One*. Hence, after the Primal One there are unities;<sup>11</sup> after the First Intellect there are intellects; after the First Soul there are souls; and after Total Nature there are natures.

beautifully observes, (*Theol. Plat.* p. 123), there is One God and many gods; one Unity and many unities prior to beings; and one Goodness and many goodnesses, after the First Good. It likewise follows that the First Principle of all is a super-essential One, and that after this One there are many super-essential unities. And we may consider every unity of beings as the flower of some certain being; and as the summit and centre about which every being subsists. For a further account and confirmation of this sublime doctrine, study the third book of Proclus on Plato's Theology. ♦T.

## PROPOSITION XXII.

**Every thing which subsists primarily and principally in each order is one, and is neither two, nor more than two, but is wholly one alone.**

For, if it be possible, let there be two things which thus subsist, since there will be the same impossibility if there are more than two; or let that which subsists primarily consist of each of these. But if, indeed, it consists of each it will again be one, and there will not be two things which are first. And if it be one of the two, each will not be first. Nor, if both are equally primary, will each have a principal subsistence. For if one of them is primary, but this is not the same with the other, what will it be in that order? For that subsists primarily [22] which is nothing else than that which it is said to be. But each of these being different is, and at the same time is not, that which it is said to be.

If, therefore, these differ from each other, but they do not primarily differ so far as they are that which they are said to be, — for this primarily experiences that which is the same, — both will not be first, but will be that of which both participating are thereby said to subsist primarily.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that what

is primarily being is one alone, and that there are not two primary beings, or more than two; that the first intellect is one alone, and that there are not two first intellects; and that the first soul is one. This is also the case with every form, such as the primarily beautiful and the primarily equal. Thus, too, with respect to the form of animals, and the form of man, the first of each is one; for the demonstration is the same.

## On the Imparticipable.

### PROPOSITION XXIII.

**Every imparticipable produces the things which are participated: and all the natures which are participated strive for imparticipable essences.**

For that which is imparticipable, having the relation of a monad, as subsisting from itself and not from another, and being exempt from participants, produces those things which may be participated. For either it is of itself barren, remaining within itself, and possessing nothing worthy of honor, or it will impart something from itself. And that which receives indeed from it will participate it; but that which was given will subsist. But everything participating of another by which it is generated, is secondary to that which is similarly present to [23] all things, and which fills all things from itself. For that which is in one only is not in others. But that which is similarly present to all things, in order that it may illuminate all, is not in one thing, but is prior to all things. For it is either in all things, or in one of all, or is prior to all. But that indeed which is in all things, being distributed into all, will again require another thing which may unite that which is distributed. And all things will no longer participate of the same thing, but this of one and that of another, the one being divided. But if it is in one alone of all things it will no longer be common to all, but to one thing. Hence, if it is common to all things able to participate, and is common to all, it will be prior to all. But this is imparticipable, [because it neither is nor can be participated by anything.]<sup>12</sup>

12. The imparticipable is that which is not consubsistent with a subordinate nature. Thus imparticipable intellect is the intellect which is not consubsistent with soul, but is exempt from it. And imparticipable soul is the soul which is not consubsistent with body. And so in other things. ♦T.

### PROPOSITION XXIV.

**Every thing which participates is inferior to that which is participated by it; and that which is participated is inferior to that which is**

## **imparticipable.**

For that which participates, since it is imperfect prior to participation, but becomes perfect through participation, is entirely secondary to that which is participated so far as it is perfect by participating. For so far as it was imperfect it is inferior to that which it participates, which causes it to become perfect. But that which is participated by a certain one and not by all, is on this account allotted an hyparxis or essence subordinate to that which is common to all things, and not to a certain one thing: for the latter is more allied but the [24] former less to the cause of all.

The imparticipable, therefore, is the leader of things which are participated; but the latter are the leaders of participants. For, in short, the imparticipable is one prior to the many; but that which is participated in the many is one and at the same time not one; and everything which participates is not one and at the same time one.

## **On the Perfect.**

### **PROPOSITION XXV.**

**Everything perfect proceeds to the generation of those things which it is able to produce, imitating the One Principle of all.**

For as the one Principle by reason of its own goodness is unically constitutive of all beings, — for The Good and The One are the same, so that the boniform is the same with the unical, — thus, also, those things which are posterior to the First Principle, on account of their perfection, hasten to generate beings inferior to their own essence: for perfection is a certain part or quality of The Good, and the perfect so far as it is perfect imitates The Good. But The Good is constitutive of all things: so that the perfect is likewise productive according to its nature of those things which it is able to produce. And that indeed which is more perfect, the more perfect it is the more numerous are the progeny of which it is the cause. For that which is more perfect participates in a greater degree of The Good. It is therefore nearer to The Good, is more allied to the cause of all, and is the cause of a greater number of effects. That, however, which is more imperfect, the more imperfect it is the less numerous are the effects



of which it is the cause; for, being more remote from the producer of [25] everything, it is the cause of fewer effects. For to that which constitutes, or adorns, or perfects, or connects, or vivifies, or fabricates all things, that nature is most allied which produces a greater number of each of these; but that is more remote which produces a less number of each.

*Corollary.*— From the premises it is evident that the nature which is most remote from the Principle of all is unprolific and is not the cause of anything. For if it generated a certain thing, and had something posterior to itself, it is evident that it would no longer be the most remote, but that which it produced would be more remote than itself from the Principle of all things; it would therefore be nearer to productive power, and, in addition, would imitate the cause which is productive of all beings.

## **On that Which Produces.**

### **PROPOSITION XXVI.**

**Every cause which is productive of other things, itself abiding in itself, produces the natures posterior to itself, and those which are successive.**

For if it imitates The One, but that immovably constitutes the things posterior to itself, everything which produces will possess in a similar manner the cause of productive energy. But The One constitutes things immovably. For if through motion, the motion will be in it; and, being moved, it will no longer be The One, because it will be changed from The One. But if motion subsists together with or after it, it will also be from The One, and either there will be a progression to infinity, or The One will produce immovably, and every thing which produces will imitate the producing cause [26] of all things. For everywhere from that which is primarily that which is not primarily derives its subsistence; so that the nature which is productive of certain things originates from that which is productive of all things. Hence every producing cause produces subsequent natures from itself. And while productive natures abide in themselves undiminished, secondary natures are produced by them. For that which is in any respect diminished cannot abide such as it is.

## **PROPOSITION XXVII.**

**Every producing cause, by reason of its perfection and abundance of power, is productive of secondary natures.**

For if it produced not on account of the perfect, but through a defect of power, it would not be able to preserve its own order immovable. For that which imparts being to another thing through defect and imbecility imparts subsistence to it through its own mutation and change in quality. But every thing which produces remains such as it is, and in consequence of thus remaining that which is posterior to it proceeds into existence. Hence, being full and perfect, it constitutes secondary natures immovably and without diminution, it being that which it is, and neither being changed into them nor diminished. For that which is produced is not a distribution into parts of the producing cause; since this is neither appropriate to generation, nor to generating causes. Nor is it a transition of one nature into another: for it does not become the matter of that which proceeds; since it remains such as it is, and that which is produced is different from it. Hence that which generates abides without alteration and undiminished; through prolific power multiplies itself, and from itself imparts secondary hypostases or natures. [27]

## **PROPOSITION XXVIII.**

**Every producing cause constitutes things similar to itself, prior to such as are dissimilar.**

For since that which produces is necessarily more excellent than the thing produced, they can never be simply the same with each other and equal in power. But if they are not the same and equal, but different and unequal, they are either entirely separated from each other, or they are both united and separated. If, however, they are entirely separated, they will not accord with each other, and nowhere will that which proceeds from a cause sympathize with it. Hence, neither will one of these participate of the other, since they are entirely different from it. For that which is participated gives communion to its participant with reference to that of which it participates. Moreover, it is necessary that the thing caused should participate of its cause, as from thence deriving its essence.

But if that which is produced is partly separated from and partly united to its producing cause, — if, indeed, it experiences each of these equally, — it will equally participate and not participate: so that in the same manner it will have essence and not have it from the producing cause. And if it is more separated from than united to it, the thing generated will be more foreign than allied to that by which it is generated, will be more unadapted than adapted to it, and be more deprived of than possess sympathy with it. If, therefore, the things which proceed from causes are allied to them according to their very being, have sympathy with them, are naturally dependent on them, and aspire after contact with them, desiring good, and obtaining the object of their desire through the cause of their existence ♦ if this be the case, it is evident that things produced are in a greater degree Med to their producing causes than separated from [28] them. Things, however, which are more united are more similar than dissimilar to the natures to which they are especially united. Every producing cause, therefore, constitutes things similar to itself prior to such as are dissimilar.

### **PROPOSITION XXIX.**

**Every progression is effected through a similitude of secondary to primary natures.**

For if that which produces constitutes similars prior to dissimilars, the similitude derived from the producing causes will constitute the things produced. For similars are rendered similar through similitude, and not through dissimilitude. If, therefore, progression in its diminution preserves a certain sameness of that which is generated with that which generates, and shows that such as the generator is primarily so is that posterior to it secondarily, it will have its nature through similitude.

### **PROPOSITION XXX.**

**Everything which is produced from a certain thing without a medium, abides in its producing cause, and proceeds from it.**

For if every progression is effected while primary natures remain permanent, and is accomplished through similitude, similars being constituted prior to

dissimilars — if this be the case, that which is produced will in a certain respect abide in its producing cause. For that which entirely proceeds will have nothing which is the same with the abiding cause, but will be perfectly separated from it. But if it has anything in common with and united to it, it will abide in its cause in the same manner as that abides in itself. If, however, it abides only but does not proceed, it will in no respect differ from its cause, nor will it while that abides be generated something different from it. For if it is something different [29] it is separated and apart from its cause. If, however, it is apart, but the cause abides, it will proceed from the cause in order that while it abides it may be separated from it. So far, therefore, as that which is produced has something which is the same with the producing cause, it abides in it; but so far as it is different, it proceeds from it. Being, however, similar, it is in a certain respect at once both the same and different. Hence it abides and at the same time proceeds, and does neither of these without the other.

### **PROPOSITION XXXI.**

**Every thing which proceeds from, another essentially, returns to that from which it proceeds.**

For if it should proceed, indeed, but should not return to the cause of this progression, it would not desire its cause. For everything which desires is converted to the object of its desire. Moreover, every thing desires good, and to each thing the attainment of it is through the proximate cause. Every thing, therefore, desires its cause: and the cause of being to any particular thing is likewise the cause of well-being (good) to it. But desire is primarily directed to the cause of well-being: and conversion or return is to that to which desire primarily tends.

### **PROPOSITION XXXII.**

**Every conversion or return is effected through the similitude of the things converted to that to which they are converted.**

For every thing which is converted hastens to be conjoined with its cause, and desires communion and colligation with it. But similitude binds all things together, just as dissimilitude separates and disjoins all things. If, therefore, conversion or return is a certain

communion and contact, but all communion and all contact [30] are through similitude — if this be the case, every conversion will be effected through similitude.

### **PROPOSITION XXXIII.**

**Every thing which proceeds from another and returns to it has a circular energy (activity).**

For if it returns to that from which it proceeds, it conjoins the end to the beginning, and the motion is one and continuous — emanating from the abiding cause and returning to it. Hence all things proceed in a circle from causes to causes: but there are greater and less circles of conversions (returns), some of which are to the natures immediately above the things which are converted, but others are to still higher natures, and so on to the Principle of all things. For all things proceed from this Principle, and return to it.<sup>13</sup>

13. In order to understand this Proposition the reader must observe that the hypothesis requires that both the progression and regression subsist together. And this hypothesis is no less proper than true: for unless effects were continually converted to their causes they could not exist, since they depend on these for their subsistence, and this can only be procured by conversion. ♦T.

### **PROPOSITION XXXIV.**

**Every thing which is converted according to nature makes its return to that from which it received the progression of its characteristic essence.**

For if it is converted according to nature, it will have an essential desire for that to which it is converted. But if this be the case, the whole being of it depends on that to which it makes an essential conversion, and it is essentially similar to it. Hence also it has a natural sympathy with it because it is cognate to the essence of it. If this be so, either the being of each is the same, or the one is derived from the other, or both are allotted similitude from a certain other one. But if the being of [31] each is the same, how is the one naturally converted to the other? And if both are from a certain one, it will be according to nature for each to be converted to that one. It remains, therefore, that the one must derive its being from the other. But if this be the case, the progression will be from that to which the conversion or return is according to nature.

*Corollary.*— From these things, therefore, it is evident that intellect is the object of desire to all things, that all things proceed from intellect, and that the whole world, though it is eternal, possesses its essence from intellect. For the world is not prevented from proceeding from intellect because it is eternal: neither because

it is always arranged is it not converted to intellect, but it always proceeds, is essentially eternal, always converted, and is indissoluble because it always remains in the same order.

### PROPOSITION XXXV.

**Every thing caused abides in, proceeds from, and returns to, its cause.**

For if it alone abided, it would in no respect differ from its cause, since it would be without separation and distinction from it. For progression is accompanied with separation. But if it alone proceeded, it would be unconjoined and deprived of sympathy with its cause, having no communication with it whatever. And if it were alone converted, how can that which has not its essence from the cause be essentially converted to that which is foreign to its nature? But if it should abide and proceed, but should not return, how will there be a natural desire to everything of well-being and of good, and an excitation to its generating cause? And if it should proceed and return, but should not abide, how, being separated from its cause, will it hasten to be conjoined with it? For it was unconjoined prior to its departure; [32] since, if it had been conjoined, it would entirely have abided in it. But if it should abide and return, but should not proceed, how can that which is not separated be able to revert to its cause? For every thing which is converted resembles that which is resolved into the nature from which it is essentially divided. It is necessary, therefore, either that it should abide alone, or return alone, or alone proceed, or that the extremes should be bound to each other, or that the medium should be conjoined with each of the extremes, or that all should be conjoined. Hence it follows that every thing must abide in its cause, proceed from, and return to it.<sup>14</sup>

14. The return or conversion {επιστροφή} is a rectifying of the way of life (ενστασεως επανορθωσις). As all things proceed from The One, so all yearn for their Principle and return to it, to the extent of their power. There are three primary forms of return, viz, through essence, through life, through knowledge. And in every Principle there are abiding, progression and return (μονη, προοδος, επιστροφή)

### PROPOSITION XXXVI.

**Of all things which are multiplied in progression the first are more perfect than the second, the second than those posterior to them, and after the same manner successively.**

For if progressions separate productions from their causes, and there are diminutions of things secondary with respect to those which are first, it follows that first natures in proceeding are more conjoined with

their causes, being as it were germinations from them. But secondary natures are more remote from their causes, and in a similar manner those which are successive. Things, however, which are nearer and more allied to their causes are more perfect. For causes are more perfect than things caused. But things which are more remote are more imperfect, because they are dissimilar to their causes. [33]

### PROPOSITION XXXVII.

**Of all things which subsist according to conversion, the first are more imperfect than the second, and the second, than those that follow; but the last are the most perfect.**

For if conversions are effected in a circle, and conversion or return is to that from which progression is derived, but progression is from that which is most perfect, hence conversion tends to the most perfect. And if conversion first begins from that in which progression terminates, but progression terminates in that which is most imperfect, conversion will begin from the most imperfect. Hence in things which subsist according to conversion, the most imperfect are the first, but the most perfect are the last.

### PROPOSITION XXXVIII.

**Every thing which proceeds from many causes returns through as many, and every conversion is through the same causes which produced the progression.<sup>15</sup>**

For since both progression and return become through similitude, that indeed which passes immediately from a certain thing likewise immediately returns to it. For the similitude here is without a medium. But [34] that which requires a medium in proceeding requires also a medium in returning. For it is necessary that each should be effected with reference to the same thing. Hence the return will be first to the medium, and then to that which is better than the medium. Therefore the causes of being to each thing are equal in number to the causes of well-being, and *vice versa*.

15. "The principal momenta in the dialectical process by which, according to Proclus, the formation of the world was accomplished, are the issuing of a thing from the cause and its return to the same. That which is brought forth is at the same time like and unlike its cause: in virtue of its likeness it is contained and remains in its cause; in virtue of its unlikeness it is separated from it; it must return to its cause by becoming like it, and in this return the same stadia are involved as in the previous forward or out-coming movement. All reality is subject to this law of triadic

development. But the oftener the process is repeated the less perfect is the result. What is first is highest, the last is the lowest in rank and worth. The development is a descending one, and may be symbolized by the descending course of a spiral line."

◆ Ueberweg.

### **PROPOSITION XXXIX.**

**Every being either alone essentially returns, or vitally, or gnostically.**

For either it alone possesses being from its cause, or life with being, or it receives from thence a gnostic power. So far, therefore, as every being alone is, it makes an essential conversion, but so far as it lives, a vital, and so far as it knows, agnostic conversion. For as it proceeded from its cause, so does it return to it, and the measures of its conversion are limited by the measures according to its progression. The desire to return therefore is to some according to being alone, this desire being an aptitude for the participation of causes; but to others it is according to life, being a motion to more excellent natures; and to others it is according to knowledge, being a conscious perception of the goodness of their causes.

### **PROPOSITION XL.**

**The natures which exist from and of themselves, and have a self-subsistent essence, precede those which proceed from, another cause.**

For if every nature which is self-sufficient, either by reason of its essence or energy, is more excellent than that which depends on another cause; and that which produces itself, since it produces the being of itself, is sufficient to itself with respect to essence; and that which is alone produced by another is not sufficient to itself; [35] and the self-sufficient is more allied to The Good; and things more allied and similar to their causes subsist from cause prior to such as are dissimilar; — this being the case, the natures which are produced by themselves, and are self-subsistent, are more ancient than those which proceed into existence from another cause alone. For either there will be



nothing self-subsistent, or The Good is a thing of this kind, or the first things which subsist from The Good. But if there is nothing self-subsistent, truly there will not be in anything self-sufficiency. It will not be in The Good, since that being The One is better than self-sufficiency: it is also The Good itself, and not that which possesses The Good. Nor will self-sufficiency be in things posterior to The Good: for all things will be indigent of that which is prior to their nature. But if The Good is self-subsistent, because it produces itself, it will not be The One. For that which proceeds from The One is not The One. And it would proceed from itself, if it was self-subsistent; so that The One would at the same time be one and not one. Hence it is necessary that the self-subsistent should be posterior to the First. And it is evident that it will be prior to things which alone proceed from another cause: for it has a more principal subsistence than these, and is more allied to The Good, as has been demonstrated.

## **PROPOSITION XLI.**

**Every thing which is in another is alone produced, by another; but every thing which is in itself is self-subsistent.**

For that which is in another and is indigent of a subject can never be generative of itself. For that which is naturally competent to generate itself does not require another base, because it is contained by itself, and is preserved in itself apart from a subject. But that which abides, and is able to be established in itself, is productive of itself, itself proceeding into itself, and being connective [36] of itself: and thus it is in itself, as the thing caused is in its cause. For it is not in itself, as in place or as in a subject: since place is different from that which is in place, and that which is in a subject is different from the subject. But this which is in itself is the same with that in which it is inherent. It is therefore self-subsistent, and abides in itself as that which is from a cause is in the cause.

## **PROPOSITION XLII.**

**Every thing self-subsistent is able to return to itself.**

For if it proceeds from itself, it will likewise return to itself. For to that which is the source of a progression there is a return coordinate to the progression. For if it alone proceeded from itself, and did not return to itself,

it would never strive for its characteristic good, and that which it is able to impart to itself. Every cause, however, is able to impart to that which proceeds from it both essence and well-being conjoined with this essence. Hence that which is self-subsistent will impart this to itself. This therefore is the proper good to that which is self-subsistent. And hence this will not be the object of desire to that which does not return to itself. But not desiring this good, it will not obtain it, and not obtaining it, it will be imperfect and not self-sufficient. If, however, self-sufficiency and perfection belong to anything, it must be to that which is self-subsistent. Hence it will desire and obtain its characteristic good, and will return to itself.

### **PROPOSITION XLIII.**

**Every thing which is able to return to itself is self-subsistent.**

For if it returns to itself according to nature, it is perfect in the conversion to itself, and will possess essence from itself. For from every thing to which there is a return according to nature, there is equally a progression [37] according to essence. If, therefore, it imparts well-being to itself, it will likewise undoubtedly impart being to itself, and will be the lord of its own hypostasis or nature. Hence that which is able to revert to itself is self-subsistent.

### **PROPOSITION XLIV.**

**Every thing which is able to return to itself through energy or activity, is likewise able to return to itself through essence.**

For if it is capable of reverting to itself through its activity but not through its essence, it will be more excellent in activity than in essence, the former being revertive, but the latter not. For that which depends on itself is better than that which alone depends on another. And that which has a power of preserving itself is more perfect than that which is alone preserved by another. If, therefore, it is revertible to itself through the activity emanating from essence, it will also be allotted a revertible essence, so that it will not alone energize within itself but will depend on itself, and will be contained, connected, and perfected by itself.

## PROPOSITION XLV.

### **Every thing self-subsistent is unbegotten.**

For if it be generated, because of its generation it will be imperfect of itself, and will be indigent of perfection emanating from another. Because, however, it produces itself, it is perfect and self-sufficient. For every thing generated is perfected by another, which imparts generation to it not yet existing. For generation is a path from the imperfect to its contrary, the perfect. But if anything produces itself it is always perfect, since it is always present with the cause of itself, or rather is inherent in that which is perfective of its essence.

[38]

## PROPOSITION XLVI.

### **Every thing self-subsistent is incorruptible.**

For if it should be corrupted, it would depart from itself and would be without itself. This, however, is impossible. For, since it is one, it is at the same time cause and the thing caused. But every thing which is corrupted, is corrupted departing from its cause. For so far as it adheres to that which contains, connects, and preserves it, it is connected and preserved. But that which is self-subsistent never leaves its cause because it does not desert itself: for it is its own cause. Everything, therefore, which is self-subsistent is incorruptible.

## PROPOSITION XLVII.

### **Every thing self-subsistent is impartible and simple.**

For if it is partible, since it is self-subsistent, it will constitute itself partible, and the whole will return to itself, and all will be in all itself.<sup>16</sup> This, however, is impossible. Hence that which is self-subsistent is impartible, but it is likewise simple. For, if it is a composite, one thing in it will be less but another more excellent, and the more will be derived from the less excellent, and the less from the more excellent, if the whole proceeds from itself.<sup>17</sup> Further, it would not be self-sufficient, since it would be indigent of its own elements, of which it consists.<sup>18</sup> [39]

16. This is absurd, because every partible nature must be converted to something different from itself, on account of its parts. So, likewise, since a self-subsistent nature resides in itself, if such a nature was partible one divisible whole would be in another, not different from itself. ♦T.

Every thing, therefore, which is self-subsistent is impartible and simple.

17. Because every composite consists of matter and form; the former of which is less and the latter more excellent.

◆T.

18. See Porphyry's *Auxiliaries to the Perception of Intelligible Natures*, Nos. XXXIII. and XXXVI.

## On the Perpetual, Demonstrating That the World is Perpetual.<sup>19</sup>

### PROPOSITION XLVIII.

**Every thing which is not perpetual is either a composite subsists in another.**

For either it is dissoluble into those things of which [40] it consists, and is entirely composed of the things into which it is dissolved, or it is indigent of a subject and, leaving the subject, it departs into nonentity. But if it is simple in itself it will be indissoluble and incapable of being dissipated.

### PROPOSITION XLIX.

**Every self-subsistent nature is perpetual.**

For there are two modes according to which it is necessary a thing should not be perpetual: the one arising from composition, and the other from a subsistence in something else, as in a subject. That which is self-subsistent, however, is neither a composite but a simple, nor in another but in itself. Hence it is perpetual.

19. "He participates also the eternity of Intellect, as an image thereof; otherwise he would at some time cease to possess that image. But this is not an image formed by art; and every image formed by nature lasts as long as its archetype endures. For this reason they are not in the right who suppose that the sensible world will perish while the intelligible remains, and who think the former was produced as the result of deliberation on the part of the Creator. For whatever be the manner of such a creation, they will not understand, nor do they know, that as long as that intelligible world shines, this world of ours will never fail, but since that *is*, this also exists. But the intelligible world ever was and ever will be; for we are obliged, by the desire of signifying something concerning it, to employ such words as these," *i.e.*, such expressions as "*was*" and "*will be*" cannot properly be applied to that which is eternal. ◆Plotinus:

En. V. Lib. 8. 12. An excellent translation of this book, *Concerning Intelligible Beauty*, by W. C. Ward, appeared in The Theosophical

Review. See further, on the Perpetuity of the World, Plotinus: En. II. Lib. 1., *On the Heaven*, and En. III. Lib. 7., *On Eternity and Time*; Proclus: *Theol. Plat.* Lib. III. 16., and Stobaeus in Eclog. Lib. I. cap. 22.

To αἰδιον, The Perpetual. Is that which subsists always, but is connected with the three parts of time, the past, present, and future. Hence the fabricator of the world is eternal, but the world is perpetual. ♦T.

To αἰωνιον, The Eternal. Is that which has a never ending subsistence, without any connection with time. For Eternity, as it is profoundly defined by Plotinus, is infinite life, the whole of which is at once present, without any thing belonging to it being consumed, and in which there is neither past nor future. (En. III. Lib. 7.) -T.

## PROPOSITION L.

**Every thing which is measured by time, either according to essence or according to activity, is generation so far as it is measured by time.**

For if it is measured by time it will belong to it to be, or to act, in time; and the *was* and the *will be*, which differ from each other, pertain to it. For if the *was* and the *will be* were the same in number, that which is measured by time would suffer nothing by time proceeding, and always having one part prior and another posterior. If, therefore, the *was* and the *will be* are different, that which is measured by time is becoming to be and never is, but proceeds together with time by which it is measured, existing in a tendency to being.<sup>20</sup>

20. See [Additional Notes](#).

It likewise does not stop in the same state of being, but is always receiving another and another *being*, just as

*the now* in time is always another and another, through the progression of time. Hence it is not a simultaneous whole; for it subsists in a dispersion of temporal extension, [41] and is co-extended with time. This, however, is to possess being in non-being. For that which is becoming to be is not that which is become. Generation, therefore, is such a kind of being.

### **PROPOSITION LI.**

**Every thing self-subsistent is essentially exempt from the natures which are measured by time.**

For if that which is self-subsistent is unbegotten, it will not be measured by time, according to existence. For generation is conversant with the nature which is measured by time. Hence nothing self-subsistent has its being in time.

### **PROPOSITION LII.**

**Every thing eternal is a whole which subsists at once: whether it has its essence alone eternal, possessing the whole at once present, but not having one of its parts already constituted, and another to be constituted because it is not yet in existence, but as much as is possible it now possesses the whole without diminution and without extension — or whether it has its activity as well as its essence at once present, it possessing this likewise collectively, abiding in the same measure of perfection, and as it were fixed immovably and without transition according to one and the same boundary.**

For if the eternal, as the name denotes, is unceasing being, but being and becoming to be are different from unceasing being, it is not right that it should have one thing prior and another posterior. For in that case it would be generation and not being. But where there is neither prior nor posterior, nor was and will be, but being alone, and this a whole, there every thing subsists at once that which it is. The same thing likewise takes place with respect to the activity of that which is eternal. [42]

*Corollary.*— From this it is evident that eternity is the cause to wholes of their existence as wholes, since every thing which is eternal either in essence or in energy, has the whole of its essence or energy present to

itself.

## On Eternity and Eternal Natures.

### PROPOSITION LIII.

**Eternity subsists prior to all eternal natures, and time exists prior to every thing which subsists in time.**

For if everywhere the natures which are participated are prior to their participants, and imparticipables are prior to participated natures, it is evident that the eternal is one thing, the eternity which is in the eternal another, and eternity itself another. And the first of these indeed subsists as a participant, the second as a thing participated, and the third as an imparticipable. That likewise which is in time is one thing, for it is a participant; the time which is in this is another thing, for it is participated: and the time prior to this is another thing, for it is imparticipable. Everywhere, also, each of these is from the imparticipable, which is in all things the same. But that which is participated is in those things only by which it is participated. For there are many eternal and many temporal natures, in all of which eternity subsists by participation. The time also which is in temporal natures subsists divisibly; but the time which they participate is indivisible. And there is one time prior to both of these. Eternity itself, likewise, is an eternity of eternities, and time itself is a time of times; and the one constitutes participated eternity, but other participated time.<sup>21</sup>

21. See Plato's *Timaeus*, pp. 36, 38; Aristotle's *On the Heaven*, I. 9; Plotinus' book, *On Eternity and Time*; Proclus *On the Theology of Plato*, I. 13., III. 16., and V. 30; and Jo, Laur. Lydus *De Mensibus*, p. 41.

[43]

### PROPOSITION LIV.

**Every eternity is the measure of eternal natures, and every time is the measure of things in time; and these are the only two measures of life and motion in beings.**

For every thing which measures, either measures according to a part, or it measures the whole at once when it is adapted to that which is measured. That which measures, therefore, according to the whole is eternity, but that which measures according to parts is time. Hence there are only two measures, the one of things eternal, but the other of things in time.

## PROPOSITION LV.

**Every thing which subsists in time, either subsists through the whole of time, or has its hypostasis once in a part of time.**

For if all progressions are through similitude, and things more similar to first natures subsist in union with them prior to those which are dissimilar, but it is impossible for things which are generated in a part of time to be conjoined with eternal natures — for, because they are generated they differ from first natures, which are self-subsistent, and as existing at one time they are separated from things which always exist, but the media between these are the things which are partly similar and partly dissimilar to them — this being the case, the medium between things which are at one time generated and those that exist always is either that which is always becoming to be, or that which is at one time, or that which is not truly being. It is, however, impossible it should be that which at one time only truly is. And that which is at one time not truly being is the same with that which is becoming to be: hence this is not the medium. It follows, therefore, that the medium between both is that which is always becoming to be, conjoined [44] indeed with the worse of the two through becoming to be, but through subsisting always imitating an eternal nature.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that the perpetuity is two-fold, the one eternal, but the other temporal. The one likewise a stable, but the other a flowing perpetuity. And the one indeed has its being united, and the whole subsisting at once, but the other diffused and expanded according to temporal extension. And the one is a whole of itself, but the other consists of parts, each of which is separate, according to prior and posterior.

## PROPOSITION LVI.

**Every thing which is produced by secondary natures is produced in a greater degree by prior and more causal natures, by whom those which are secondary were also produced.**

For if that which is secondary has the whole of its essence from that which is prior to it, its power of producing is also derived from thence, — for productive powers are essentially in producing causes, and give



completion to the essence of them. But if it is allotted the power of producing from a superior cause, it will have from that its existence as the cause of things of which it is the cause, and its power of constituting other things will be measured from thence. If, however, this be the case, the things proceeding from it are effects through that which is prior to it. For the one perfects a cause, and the other the thing caused. But if this be so, the thing caused is from thence rendered such as it is.

Moreover, that it is likewise in a greater degree perfected from thence is evident. For if that which is first imparts to that which is second the cause of [45] producing, it will primarily possess this cause; and on this account that which is secondary generates, receiving from the first a secondary generative power. If however, the one becomes productive through participation, but the other in a way superior to participation and primarily, that will be in a greater degree a cause which imparts generative power to another thing proximate to its own nature.

## **PROPOSITION LVII.**

**Every cause energizes prior to the thing caused, and constitutes more effects posterior to it.**

For so far as it is cause it is more perfect and more powerful than that which is posterior to it, and by reason of this is the cause of more effects. For it is the province of a greater power to produce more, of an equal power to produce equal, and of a less power to produce a less, number of effects. And the power which is able to effect greater things among similars is also capable of effecting those which are less. But that which is able to effect those which are less is not necessarily capable of producing those which are greater. If, therefore, the cause is more powerful, it is productive of more numerous effects.

22. See Proclus, *On the Theology of Plato*, I.13. II.4. and III.7., where the conceptions of Parmenides, Plato, Plotinus, and others on the subject are examined and unfolded.

Moreover, the effects which the thing caused is able to produce, the cause is in a greater degree able to produce. For every thing which is produced by secondary natures is in a greater degree produced by those which are prior and more causal. All things, therefore, which the thing caused is naturally able to produce co-exist with and are produced by the cause. But if likewise it produces prior to it, it is indeed evident that it energizes prior to the thing caused, according to the

energy which is productive of it. Every cause, therefore, energizes prior to the thing caused, and with it and posterior to [46] it constitutes other things.

*Corollary.*— Hence it is evident that of the things of which soul is the cause, intellect likewise is the cause; but that soul is not equally the cause of the things of which intellect is the cause. But intellect energizes prior to the soul. And the things which soul imparts to secondary natures, intellect likewise imparts in a greater degree: and when soul no longer energizes, intellect imparts by illumination the gifts of itself to those things to which soul does not impart herself. For that which is inanimate, so far as it participates of form participates of intellect, and the production of intellect.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, of the things of which intellect is the cause, The Good likewise is the cause; but not vice versa. For the privations of forms are from The Good; since all things are from thence. But intellect, since it is form, does not constitute privation.

### **PROPOSITION LVIII.**

**Every thing which is produced by many is more composite than that which is produced by fewer causes.**

For if every cause imparts something to that which proceeds from it, more causes will impart a greater number of gifts, but fewer causes a less number. Hence, of participants some will consist of a greater number of things, but others of a less number, of which each participates; some, indeed, through a progression from a greater number of causes, but others from a less. Those, however, which proceed from a greater number of causes are more composite, but those from a less number of the same causes are more simple. Every thing, therefore, which is produced by a greater number of causes is more composite, but that which is produced by [47] a less number is more simple. For the more composite participates of those things of which the more simple participates, but the contrary to this is not true.

### **PROPOSITION LIX.**

**Every thing which is simple in essence is either better or worse than composite natures.**

For if the beings which are the extremes of things are 23. See Aristotle's

produced by fewer and more simple causes, but those which are in the middle by a great number of causes, the latter indeed will be composites, but of the former some are more simple according to that which is better, but others according to that which is worse. That the extremes, however, are produced by fewer causes is evident, because the natures which are higher begin to produce prior to those which are subordinate, and extend beyond them to things to which subordinate natures do not proceed, through a diminution of power. Therefore the last of things, *i.e.*, matter, is most simple, as well as the first of things, because it proceeds from the first alone. But, of these simplicities one is better than all composition, but the other according to that which is worse. And there is the same reasoning with respect to all things.<sup>23</sup>

*Metaphysics*, VII. 17. and Plotinus: En. V. 3.13., En. IV. 7.2., En. VI. 2., 9, 10., and Proclus, *On the Theology of Plato*, VI. 11. -A

### PROPOSITION LX.

**Every thing which is the cause of many effects is better than that which is allotted a power of producing few, and which produces the parts of those things the wholes of which the other constitutes.**

For if the one is the cause of a few, but the other of many effects, but the former are parts of the latter, that which constitutes many effects will produce all that [48] the other produces, but not *vice versa*. Hence the former of these two is more powerful and more comprehensive. For as that which proceeds is to that which proceeds, so is one productive power to another, when assumed with reference to each other. For that which is able to effect a greater number of things possesses a greater and more total power. But this is nearer to the cause of all things. That, however, which is nearer to the cause is in a greater degree good, just as the cause of all is The Good itself. Hence that which is the cause of many effects is essentially more excellent than that which produces a few.

### PROPOSITION LXI.

**Every power which is impartible is greater, but when divided is less.**

For if it is divided it proceeds into multitude. And if this be so, it becomes more remote from The One. But because of this it is able to effect a fewer number of

things, through departing from The One, which contains it, and will be imperfect, since the good of every-thing consists in union.

## PROPOSITION LXII.

**Every multitude which is nearer to The One is less in quantity than things more remote from it, but is greater in power.**

For that which is nearer to is more similar to The One. But The One constitutes all things without having any multitude in itself. Hence that which is more similar to it, since it is the cause of a greater number of effects, if The One is the cause of all things, will be more unical and more impartible and thereby resemble The One. As, therefore, that which is less multiplied is more allied to The One, so likewise, since it is allied [49] to the cause of all things, it is productive of a greater number of effects. Hence it is more powerful.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that there are more corporeal natures than souls; more souls than intellectual natures; and more intellects than divine unities. And there is the same reason or proportion in all other things.

## PROPOSITION LXIII.

**Every thing which is imparticipable constitutes two-fold orders of participated natures — one in things which occasionally participate, but the other in things which always and connascently participate.**

For that which is always participated is more similar to the imparticipable than that which is occasionally participated. Hence before the imparticipable establishes that which is occasionally it will establish that which is always participable, and which by being participated differs from that which is posterior to it, but by the always is more allied and more similar to the imparticipable. Nor are there alone things which are occasionally participated; for prior to these are the natures which are always participated, through which these also are bound to imparticipables according to a certain well-ordered progression. Nor are there alone things which are always participated. For these, possessing an inextinguishable power, since they are always, are prolific of other things which are

24. See Plotinus' book, *On the Beautiful*, (En. I. 6), chapters 1 and 2. This whole work is replete with wonderful insights, and will richly repay the deepest study. A revised reprint of Taylor's translation of this book appeared in Vol. I. nos. 11 and 12 of *The Platonist*, and a new version by the late Prof. Thomas Davidson, a scholar of remarkable attainments, was published in no. 4 of the *Bibliotheca Platonica*. The best edition of the text is that by Creuzer, Heidelberg 1814, with valuable and copious notes.

occasionally participated, and as far as to these the diminution proceeds.

*Corollary.*— From hence it is evident that of the unions proceeding from The One, and which illuminate beings, some are always but others occasionally participated. Intellectual participations, likewise, are in a similar manner twofold, as also are the animations of souls and the participations of other forms. For beauty, similitude, permanency, and sameness, since [50] they are imparticipable, are participated through natures which always participate, and, secondarily, by those that occasionally participate according to the same order.<sup>24</sup>

## PROPOSITION LXIV.

**Every archical monad constitutes a twofold number; one of self-perfect hypostases or natures, but the other of illuminations which possess their hypostasis in other things.<sup>25</sup>**

For if progression is according to diminution through things appropriate to producing causes, perfect natures will proceed from the all-perfect, and through these as media imperfect natures will proceed in a well-ordered progression, so that some will be self-perfect hypostases, but others will be imperfect. And the imperfect will become the forms of participants: for, because [51] they are imperfect, they will be indigent of subjects in their very nature. But the self-perfect hypostases will produce things which participate of themselves: for, since they are perfect, they will indeed fill these from themselves, and establish them in themselves. But they will require nothing of inferior natures to their own subsistence. Self-perfect hypostases, therefore, through their separation into multitude are indeed diminished with respect to their principal monad, but through their self-perfect hyparxis they are in a certain respect assimilated to it. But imperfect hypostases, by reason of subsisting in other things, are remote from that which subsists from itself, and through their imperfection are separated from that which perfects all things. Progressions, however, are through similars, even to natures which are entirely dissimilar. Every archical monad, therefore, constitutes a twofold number.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that of the unities some are self-perfect proceeding from The One,

25. An 'archical monad' is one which has the relation of a principle to an entity. According to Butherus, (quoted by Stobaeus in Eclog. I. 5), "number is composed of monads. The monad is the principle and measure of beings, simple, unbegotten, perpetual, alone, pure, self-subsistent, the beginning and first nature." All that is known of Butherus is that he was a Pythagorean of Cyzicus, a city of Mysia, Asia Minor, and that he flourished about the 4th Century, B.C. Aside from the quotations preserved by Stobaeus, there is nothing extant of his writings.

The author of the *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, who was almost certainly Iamblichus, says that "the monad is the principle of number." See the valuable *Introductio Arithmetica* of Nicomachus of Gerasa, I. 11. Also, Plotinus, *On the Three Archical Hypostases*, (En. V. 1.), *Auxiliaries of Porphyry*, No. XXXVIII. and Proclus, *On the Theology of Plato*, I.

but others are illuminations of unities and intellect. And some of them are self-perfect essences, but others are only the images of souls which are animated. And hence neither is every union a God — but this is true of a self-perfect unity alone — nor is every intellectual peculiarity an intellect, but an essential peculiarity alone is entitled to this appellation; nor is every illumination of soul a soul, but there are likewise images of souls.

3.

Taylor's *Theoretic Arithmetic*, (London, 1816), contains an accurate and exhaustive exposition of the nature of the monad and numbers, drawn from ancient authorities, with the addition of original matter. It is the best work on the subject.

## PROPOSITION LXV.

**Every thing which subsists in any manner whatsoever, either subsists causally, having the form of a principle, or according to hyparxis, or according to participation, iconically.**

For either that which is produced is seen in that which produces, as preexisting in cause, because every [52] cause antecedently contains in itself the thing caused, being that primarily which the thing caused is secondarily, — or that which produces is seen in that which is produced. For the latter, participating of the former, exhibits in itself secondarily that which the producing cause is primarily. Or each thing is beheld in its own order, and is neither seen in the cause nor in the effect. For the cause is better than that which exists out of the cause. But that which is in the effect is inferior to that which exists out of the cause, but is not in anything else. It is, however, necessary there should be that which in this manner is. But every thing subsists according to hyparxis in its own order.<sup>26</sup>

26. By υπαρξις, hyparxis, in these *Elements* is meant that characteristic or summit of any nature through which it subsists, and in the Gods is the same with the unity and deity of their natures. And by υποστασις, hypostasis, is meant any individual nature, whether essential or superessential, considered as something distinct and different from accident. ♦T.

## PROPOSITION LXVI.

**All beings in relation to each other are either wholes or parts, or the same or different.**

For either some of them contain, but the others are contained, or they neither contain nor are contained. And they either experience something which is the same, as participating of one, or they are separated from each other. But if they contain they will be wholes, and if they are contained, parts. If, likewise, many things participate of one, they are the same according to one. But if they are alone many things, so far as they are many they will be different from each other.

## PROPOSITION LXVII.

**Every totality is either prior to parts, or consists of parts, or is in a part.**

For either the form of each thing is surveyed in its [53] cause, and we call that which subsists in its cause a whole prior to parts, because it presubsists in the cause, or it is seen in the parts which participate of it. And this in a twofold respect: for it is either seen in all the parts together, and this is a whole consisting of parts, any part of which being absent diminishes the whole, — or, it is seen in each of the parts, so that the part likewise becomes by participation a whole; which makes the part to be a whole partially. The whole, therefore, which is according to hyparxis consists of parts; but the whole which is prior to parts is according to cause. And the whole which is in a part is according to participation: for this, likewise, according to an ultimate diminution or remission is a whole so far as it imitates the whole which consists of parts, since it is not any casual part, but that which is capable of being assimilated to a whole of which the parts likewise are wholes.

## PROPOSITION LXVIII.

**Every whole which is in a part is a part of that whole which consists of parts.**

For if it is a part, it is a part of a certain whole. And it is either a part of the whole which it contains, according to which it is said to be a whole in a part, — but thus it will be a part of itself, the part will be equal to the whole, and each will be the same, — or it will be a part of a certain other whole. And if of some other, it is either the only part of that, and thus again it will in no respect differ from the whole, being one part of one thing, — or it will be a part in conjunction with another part. For of every whole the parts are more than one, and that will be a whole of the many parts of which it consists. And thus the whole which is in a part is a part of the whole which consists of parts.

[54]

## PROPOSITION LXIX.

**Every whole which consists of parts participates of**

27. A totality of wholeness (ολοτης) is a whole which has a perpetual subsistence, and which comprehends in itself all the multitude of which it is the cause. ♦T.

**the wholeness which is prior to parts.<sup>27</sup>**

For if it consists of parts the whole is passive, *i.e.*, the whole participates of another whole. For the parts becoming one are passive to a whole on account of their union, and the whole subsists in parts which are not wholes. But the imparticipable subsist prior to everything which is participated. The imparticipable wholeness, therefore, subsists prior to that which is participated. Hence there is a certain form of wholeness [55] prior to the whole which consists of parts, which is not passive to a whole, but is wholeness itself, and from which the wholeness consisting of parts is derived. For the whole, indeed, which consists of parts subsists in many places and in many things, in various ways. It is however, necessary that there should be a monad essentially of all totalities. For neither is each of these wholes genuine, since it is indigent of parts which are not wholes, of which it consists. Nor is the whole which is in a certain thing capable of being the cause of wholeness to all other things. Hence that which is the cause to all wholes of their being wholes is prior to parts. For if this also consisted of parts, it would be a certain whole and not simply whole. And, again, this would be from another whole, and so on to infinity; or it will subsist on account of that which is primarily a whole, and which is not a whole from parts, but is a wholeness.

Of these four elements the constitution of the world took in the whole of each. Of the whole of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth its Artificer fabricated it, leaving no part of any one of these nor any power of them outside: intending thereby, first, that the world should be an animal in the highest degree a perfect whole composed of perfect parts. ♦ Plato: *Timaeus*, VII.

The doctrine of these perfect parts or wholes of the universe is of the first importance in the philosophy of Plato, and forms one of the grand articles of belief in the creed of the Platonic philosopher. ♦ T.

I believe that as the world considered as one great comprehending whole is a divine animal, so likewise every whole which it contains is a world, possessing in the first place a self-perfect unity proceeding from the ineffable, by which it becomes a god; in the second place, a divine intellect; in the third place, a divine soul; and in the last place, a deified body. That each of these wholes is the producing cause of all the multitude which it contains, and on this account is said to be a whole prior to parts, because considered as possessing an eternal form which holds all its parts together, and gives to the whole perpetuity of subsistence, it is not indigent of such parts to the perfection



of its being. And that it follows by a geometrical necessity that these wholes which rank thus high in the universe must be animated.

◆T.

See Plotinus: En. IV. 3. 2., and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* pp. 111 sq. 155 sq. 221 sq.

28. See the very valuable and profound work of Plotinus, *On the Nature of Living itself and on the Nature of Man*, (En. I. 1.) My translation of this book was printed in Vol. IV. Nos. 5 and 6 of *The Platonist*. See, further, Plotinus: En. VI. 1. and En. VI. 6. 9.; Damascius *Περί των Πρωτων Αρχων*, p. 69, ed. Ruelle, Paris, 1899; and Syrianus in *Aristot. Metaphys. II.* p. 46, ed. Kroll, Berlin, 1902.

Of the massive treatise of Damascius, *Doubts and Solutions concerning First Principles*, "which has preserved a most valuable store of recondite wisdom, and unfolded some of the sublimest mysteries of the ancient theology," unfortunately there is no English translation. In No. 2 of the *Bibliotheca Platonica* I began the publication of an English version, preceded by a biographical and bibliographical introduction, but only six chapters appeared. As I have said elsewhere, he alone who is able to rise above sensuous perceptions, and cognize universals, can comprehend and appreciate this work.

## PROPOSITION LXX.

**Every thing which is more total is among principal causes, and, prior to partial natures illuminates participants; and that which participates something remains secondary to principal causes.**

For it begins its activity in secondary natures prior to that which is posterior to it, and is present with the presence of it. When, likewise, that which is posterior to it no longer acts the more causal is still present, and continues to act. And this not only in different subjects but likewise in each of the natures which sometimes participate. Thus it is necessary, for instance, that being should be first generated, then animal, and then man. And man indeed is no more, if the rational power departs, but there is still animal, breathing and sentient. And, again, life failing, being remains. For [56] though a thing does not live, yet it has existence. And there is a similar reasoning in all things.<sup>28</sup>

The cause, however, of this is, that the more causal nature, being more efficacious, acts prior to that which participates. For the thing caused experiences first that which is more powerful. And that which is secondary again acting, that which is more powerful acts with it. Because everything which the secondary nature produces, that which is more causal produces likewise in conjunction with it. And if the former fails, the latter is still present. For the communication of the more powerful cause, operating in a greater degree, leaves last that which participates it. For through the communication of the secondary nature it corroborates its own illumination.

The Commentary of Syrianus on the II. III. XII. and XIII. books of the Metaphysics of Aristotle, an exposition of great learning and subtle reasoning, awaits a translation into any language other than the Latin. Parts of it however were translated by Taylor, in his notes to Aristotle's Metaphysics. It is an absolute and complete refutation of all the objections, apparent or otherwise, urged by Aristotle and the Peripatetics against the Platonic doctrines, especially that of Ideas.

[57]

#### **PROPOSITION LXXI.**

**All things which are among principal causes, since they possess a more universal and higher order in their effects, according to the illuminations proceeding from them, become in a certain respect subject to the communications of more partial causes. And the illuminations indeed from higher causes receive the progressions from secondary causes; but the latter are established in the former. And thus some participations precede others, and some representations extend after others, beginning from on high, to the same subject, more total causes having a prior activity, but those which are more partial supplying their participants with their communications, posterior to the activities of more total causes.**

For if more causal natures act prior to those which are secondary on account of exuberance of power, and are present to those which have a more imperfect aptitude, and likewise illuminate them; but things more subordinate and secondary in rank are supplied from those which are more causal, it is evident that the illuminations of superior natures antecedently comprehend that which participates of both of these, and give stability to the communications of things subordinate. But these illuminations of superior causes employ the resemblances of subordinate natures as

foundations, and operate on that which participates of them, the superior causes themselves having a prior activity.

## **PROPOSITION LXXII.**

**All things which in their participants have the relation of a subject proceed from more perfect and total causes.**

For the causes of a greater number of effects are more powerful and total, and are nearer to The One, than the causes of fewer effects. But the natures which constitute the things which are antecedently the subjects [58] of others, are the causes of a greater number of effects, constituting the properties or peculiarities prior to the presence of forms. And hence these among causes are more universal and perfect.

*Corollary.*— From hence it is evident why matter which derives its subsistence from The One is of itself destitute of form: and why body, though it participates of being, is of itself destitute of soul. For matter, since it is the subject of all things, proceeds from the cause of all; but body, because it is the subject of animation, derives its subsistence from that which is more universal than soul, because it participates in a certain respect of being.<sup>29</sup>

## **PROPOSITION LXXIII.**

**Every whole is at the same time a certain being and participates of being, but not every being is a whole.**

For either being and whole are the same, or the one is prior but the other posterior. If, however, a part so far as it is a part is being, (for a whole is from parts which have a being), yet it is not of itself likewise a whole. Being, therefore, and whole are not the same: for if this were the case, a part would be a nonentity. But if a part was a nonentity, the whole would not exist. For every whole is a whole of parts, either as existing prior to them, and therefore causally containing them in [59] itself, or as subsisting in them. But the part not existing, neither is it possible for the whole to exist. If, however, whole is prior to being, every being will immediately be a whole. Again, therefore, there will not be a part. This, however, is impossible. For if the whole is a whole, since it is the whole of a part, the part will be a part of the whole. It follows, therefore,

29. By matter proceeding from the cause of all, nothing more is meant than that it depends entirely on the First Cause for its shadowy and unreal subsistence: for, as the emanations of causes are extended in proportion to their eminence, hence the processions of the one extend beyond those of every other cause, and even leave faint traces of their illuminations in the dark receptacle of matter. -T.

See Plotinus: En, II. 4., which discusses the nature of matter most acutely and satisfactorily; Auxiliaries of Porphyry, Nos. XXI. XXVIII. and XXIX.; and Tholuck's *Ssufismus Sive Theosophia Persarum Pantheistica*.

that every whole is indeed a being, but not every being is a whole.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that being is primarily beyond wholeness. For the one indeed, viz. being, is present to a greater number of things; since being is present to parts, so far as they *are* parts. But the other, viz. wholeness, is present to a less number of things. For that which is the cause of a greater number of effects is more excellent; but the cause of a less number is of a subordinate nature, as has been demonstrated.

## PROPOSITION LXXIV.

**Every form is a certain whole; for it consists of many things, each of which completes the form. But not every whole is a form.**

For a particular thing is an indivisible whole, but so far as it is indivisible it is not a form. For every whole consists of parts; but form is that which may be divided into individual forms. Whole, therefore, is one thing, and form another. And the one is present to many things, but the other to a few. Hence whole is above the forms of beings.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that whole has a mediate order between being and forms. And hence it follows that being subsists prior to forms, and that forms are beings, but that not every being is a form. Whence likewise privations in the effects of causes are in a certain respect beings, but are no longer forms, [60] and by virtue of the unical power of being they likewise receive a certain obscure reflexion of being.<sup>30</sup>

30. Thus matter possesses a certain obscure image of being, but does not preserve the most debile impression of form. For as the gradations of being are more extended than those of form, and as matter is the last of things, hence matter may be said to retain the footstep of being in its dark receptacle, whilst the processions of form are reflected like echoes from its rebounding seat. ♦T.

## PROPOSITION LXXV.

**Every cause which is rightly so called is exempt from its effect.**

For if it is in the effect it either imparts completion to it, or is in a certain respect indigent of it in order to its existence, and thus it will be more imperfect than the thing caused. For being in the effect it is rather a con-cause than a cause, and is either a part of that which is generated, or an instrument of the maker. For that which is a part in the thing generated is more imperfect than the whole. The cause, likewise, which is in the

effect is an instrument of generation to the maker, being unable to define of itself the measures of production. Every cause, therefore, which is rightly so denominated, if it is more perfect than that which proceeds from it, imparts to its effect the measure of generation, and is exempt from instruments and elements, and, in brief, from everything which is called a con-cause.

## PROPOSITION LXXVI.

**Every thing which proceeds from, an immovable cause has an immutable hyparxis: but every thing which proceeds from a movable cause has a mutable hyparxis.**

For if that which makes is entirely immovable, it does not produce that which is second from itself through motion, but by its very being. If, however, this be the case, it has that which proceeds from it concurrent with its own essence. And if this be so, it will [61] produce as long as it exists. But it exists always, and therefore it always constitutes that which is posterior to itself. Hence this always emanates from thence, and always is, conjoining with *the ever* according to activity of the cause its *own ever* according to progression. If, however, the cause is moved that likewise which becomes from it is essentially mutable. For that which has its being through motion, changes its being when its movable cause is changed. For if, though produced from motion, it should itself remain immutable, it would be better than its producing cause: but this is impossible. It will not therefore be immutable. Hence it will be mutable, and will be essentially moved, imitating the motion of that which constituted, it.

## PROPOSITION LXXVII.

**Everything which is in capacity or power proceeds from that which is in activity: and that which is in capacity proceeds to that which is in activity. That likewise which is in a certain respect in capacity, so far as it is in capacity, is the offspring of that which is in a certain respect in activity: but that which is all things in capacity proceeds from that which is all things in activity.**<sup>31</sup>

For that which is in capacity is not naturally competent to bring itself into activity, because it is imperfect. For, since it is imperfect, if it should become the cause to itself of perfection, and this in activity, the cause will

31. See the "classical place" of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, VIII. 5.; the book of Plotinus, On that which is in capacity and activity, (En. II. 5); and the dictum of Proclus (*Plat. Theol.* II. 4.): "for every activity is the progeny of power."

be more imperfect than that which is produced by it. Hence that which is in capacity, so far as it is in capacity, will not be the cause to itself of a subsistence in activity. For, on this hypothesis, so far as it is imperfect, it would be the cause of perfection; [62] since everything which is in capacity, so far as it is in capacity is imperfect, but that which is in activity is perfect. Hence if that which was in capacity becomes in activity, it will have its perfection from something else. And this will either be in capacity — but thus again the imperfect will be generative of the perfect — or it will be in activity, and either some other or this which was in capacity will be that which becomes in activity. But if some other which is in activity produces, operating according to its own peculiarity, it will not by being in capacity make that which is in another to be in activity; nor will this which is now made be in activity, unless it becomes this so far as it was in capacity. It follows, therefore, that from that which is in activity that which is in capacity must be changed into that which is in activity.

**PROPOSITION LXXVIII. Every power is either perfect or imperfect.**

For the power which is prolific of activity is perfect, because it makes other things to be perfect through its own activities. That, however, which is perfective of other things is in a greater degree perfect, because it is more self-perfect. But the power which is indigent of another which pre-exists in activity, according to which indigence it is something in capacity, is imperfect. For it is indigent of the perfection which is in another, in order that by participating of it, it may become perfect. Hence such a power as this is of itself imperfect. So that the power of that which is in energy is perfect, because it is prolific of energy: but the power of that which is in capacity is imperfect, because it derives its perfection from the power which is in activity.

**PROPOSITION LXXIX.**

**Every thing which becomes, becomes from a twofold power.**

For it is requisite that the thing which becomes [63] should possess aptitude, and an imperfect power. And that which makes, since it is in activity that which the

thing generated is in capacity, antecedently comprehends a perfect power. For every activity proceeds from an inherent power. For if that which makes did not possess power, how could it act and produce another? And if that which is generated did not possess an inherent power through aptitude to become, how could it come into existence? For that which makes or acts, makes or acts in that which is receptive of acts, but not in any casual thing, and which is not naturally adapted to be acted upon by the agent.

### PROPOSITION LXXX.

**Every body of itself is naturally adapted to be passive, but every thing incorporeal to act. One, indeed, is essentially inefficacious, but the other is impassive. That which is incorporeal, however, may become passive by its association with the body; just as bodies are able to act through the participation of incorporeals.**

For body so far as it is body is alone divisible, and through this becomes passive, being entirely partible, and this to infinity. But that which is incorporeal, because it is simple, is impassive. For neither is that which is impartible capable of being divided, nor can that be changed in quality which is not a composite. Either, therefore, nothing will be effective, or this must be affirmed of an incorporeal nature; since body, so far as it is body does not act, because it is alone liable to be divided and to be acted upon. For everything which acts has an effective power; so that body, so far as it is body, will not act but so far as it contains in itself a power of acting. But body is essentially inefficacious and impotent, and hence when it acts it acts through the participation of power. Moreover, incorporeal natures becoming in bodies, participate of passions and various [64] affections; since they are divided with bodies, and enjoy their partible nature, though according to their own essence they are impartible.<sup>32</sup>

32. See Aristot. *Metaphys.* II. 4. IV. 2.; *De Anima*, II. 1.; *De Generat. et Corrupt.* 1. 2. 1. 5.; Plotinus: *En.* II. 4. 6., *En.* II. 7. 2., *En.* IV. 7. 1.; Porphyrii *Sententt.* cap. XIX-XXIX; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* II. 12. Wyttenbach, in his edition of the *Phaedo*, (pp. 195-198), has some excellent observations on the subject.

### PROPOSITION LXXXI.

**Every thing which is participated separably, is present to its participant by a certain inseparable power which it imparts to it.**

For if it is itself present to the participant in a separate manner, and is not in it, as if it possessed its sub-

sistence in it, a certain medium between the two is necessary, connecting the one with the other, and which is more similar to that which is participated, and subsists in the participant. For if this medium is separable, how can it be participated by the participant, since the participant neither contains the medium nor anything proceeding from it? A power and illumination therefore proceeding from that which is separable into the participant, conjoins both. Hence one of these will be that through which the participation is effected, another will be that which is participated, and another that which participates.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXII.**

**Every thing incorporeal, since it is revertible to itself, when it is participated by other things is participated in a separable manner.**

For, if in an inseparable manner, the activity of it would not be separate from its participant, nor likewise its essence. If, however, this were the case, it would not return to itself. For, if it returns, it will be separate [65] from its participant, each being different from the other. If, therefore, it is able to return to itself it will be participated in a separable manner, when it is participated by other things.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXIII.**

**Every nature which is gnostic of itself is able to return wholly to itself.**

For, knowing itself it is evident that it returns to itself in activity. For the knower and that which is known are one. And the knowledge of itself returns to itself as to that which is known. This knowledge, likewise, since it belongs to the knower, is a certain activity; but it is an activity of itself returning to itself, because it is able to know itself. Moreover, that it returns to itself essentially, if through activity, has been demonstrated. For every nature which by action or energizing returns to itself has likewise an essence verging to and subsisting in itself.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXIV.**

**Every nature which always is possesses an infinite**



**power.**

For if its hypostasis is never failing, the power likewise according to which *it is that which it is*, and is able to exist, is infinite. For if the power of existing was finite, it would sometime or other fail. But this failing, the existence also of that which possesses it would fail, and it would no longer be that which always is. It is necessary, therefore, that the power of that which always is, and which connects and contains it essentially, should be infinite.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXV.**

**Every nature which is always becoming to be, possesses an infinite power of becoming to be.**

For if it is always rising into existence, the power [66] of generation in it is never failing. For if this power was finite, it would cease in an infinite time. But the power of becoming to be ceasing, that which is rising into being according to this power would cease, and thus it would no longer be always becoming to be. It is, however, according to the hypothesis, always becoming to be, and hence it possesses an infinite power of rising into existence.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXVI.**

**Every nature, which is truly being is infinite, neither through multitude nor through magnitude, but by power alone.**

For every infinite is either in discrete, or in continued quantity, or in power. But that which always is, is infinite, by reason of having an inextinguishable life, a never-failing hyparxis, and an undiminished activity. But it is neither infinite on account of magnitude, — for that which is truly being is without magnitude, being self-subsistent, since every nature self-subsistent is impartible and simple, — nor is it infinite on account of multitude, for it has in the most eminent degree the form of The One, because it is most proximate and most allied to it. But it is infinite according to power, and hence it is likewise impartible and infinite: and the more it is one and impartible, the more it is infinite. For the power which is divided becomes imbecile and finite, and powers which are entirely divided are in every respect finite. For ultimate powers, and which are most remote from The One, are

in a certain respect finite, on account of their distribution into parts. But primary powers, on account of their impartibility, are infinite — for a separation into parts divulses and dissolves the power of every thing — but impartibility, compressing and contracting that which it contains, renders it never-failing and undiminished in itself.

Moreover, infinity according to magnitude, and [67] likewise according to multitude, is entirely a privation and falling off from impartibility. For that which is finite is most near to the impartible, but the infinite is most remote from it, because it entirely departs from The One. Hence that which is infinite according to power, is not infinite either according to multitude or magnitude, since infinite power subsists in union with impartibility. But the infinite either in multitude or magnitude is most remote from the impartible. If, therefore, that which is truly being was infinite either in magnitude or multitude, it would not possess infinite power. But it has infinite power, and therefore is not infinite either according to multitude or according to magnitude.<sup>33</sup>

33. For the sources of this Proposition, see the *Philebus* of Plato, especially pp. 24, 158; *Aristot. Metaphys.* X. 10.; *Plotinus: En. II.* 4. 14.; *Porphirii Sententt.* cap. XXXIII et XXXVI.; and *Proclus in Theol. Plat.* II. 1, IV. 31 sqq.

## PROPOSITION LXXXVII.

**Every eternal nature is being, but not every being is eternal.**

For the participation of being is present in a certain respect to generated natures, so far as each of these is not that which in no respect is. But if that which becomes is not entirely deprived of being, it is in a certain respect being. The eternal, however, is in no respect whatever present to generated natures, and especially not to those which do not even participate of the perpetuity which subsists according to the whole of time. Moreover, every thing eternal always is. For it participates of eternity, which imparts to the natures by which it is participated to be always that which they are. Being, therefore, is participated by a greater number of things than eternity: and hence being is beyond eternity. For by those natures by whom eternity is participated, being is likewise participated: but not every thing which participates [68] of being participates likewise of eternity.

## PROPOSITION LXXXVIII.

**Every nature which is truly being is either prior to**

**eternity, or in eternity, or participates of eternity.**

That there is true being prior to eternity, has been demonstrated. But true being is likewise in eternity: for eternity possesses the *always* in union with *being*. And every nature which is eternal has both the being and always by participation. Eternity, however, possesses the *always* primarily, but *being* by participation. But Being itself is primarily being.

### **PROPOSITION LXXXIX.**

**Every nature which is truly being consists of bound and infinity.**

For if it has infinite power, it is evident that it is infinite, and on this account is constituted of the infinite. If likewise it is impartible, and unical, through this it participates of bound: for that which participates of unity is bounded. Moreover, it is impartible, and therefore possesses infinite power. Hence every thing which is truly or primarily being is constituted of bound and infinity.

### **PROPOSITION XC.**

**The first bound and the first infinity subsist by themselves, prior to every thing which is constituted of bound and the infinite.**

For if beings which subsist by themselves are prior to those which are certain beings, because they are common to all essences and principal causes, and not the causes of certain, but in brief of all beings, it is necessary that the first bound and the first infinity should be prior to that which is constituted of both of these. For [69] the bound in that which is mixed participates of infinity, and the infinite participates of bound. But of every thing that which is the first is no other than that which it is. It is not, therefore, proper that the first infinite should have the form of bound, or that the first bound should have the form of infinity. These, therefore, are primarily prior to that which is mixed.

### **PROPOSITION XCI.**

**Every power is either finite or infinite. But every finite power emanates from infinite power: and**

**infinite power emanates from the first infinity.**

For the powers which exist at a certain time are finite, falling from the infinity of existing always: but the powers of eternal beings are infinite, because they never desert their own hyparxis.

## **PROPOSITION XCII.**

**Every multitude of infinite powers depends on one first infinity, which is not a participated power, nor does it subsist in things which are endued with power, but by and of itself; not being the power of a certain participant, but the cause of all beings.**

For though the first being possesses power, yet it is not power itself: for it likewise has bound. But the first power is infinity: because infinite powers are infinite through the participation of infinity. Infinity itself, therefore, will be prior to all powers, through which being likewise has infinite power, and all things participate of infinity. For infinity is not the first, or the ineffable principle of all, since *that* is the measure of all things, because it is The Good and The One. Nor is infinity being: for this is infinite, but not infinity itself. Hence infinity subsists between that which is first and being itself, and is the cause of all infinite powers and of all the infinity which is in beings. [70]

## **PROPOSITION XCIII.**

**Every infinite which is in true beings is neither infinite to superior natures, nor is it infinite to itself.**

For that by which each thing is infinite, by this likewise it exists uncircumscribed. But every thing which is in true beings is bounded by itself, and by all the things prior to it. It follows, therefore, that the infinite which is in true beings is infinite to subordinate natures alone, above which it is so expanded in power that it is incomprehensible by all of them. For in whatever manner they may extend themselves towards this infinite, yet it has something entirely exempt from them. And though all things enter into it, yet it has something occult and incomprehensible by secondary natures. Though likewise it evolves the powers which it contains, yet it possesses something on account of its union insurmountable, contracted, and surpassing the evolution of beings. Since, however, it contains and

34. The reader must not be surprised to find that among infinities some are more infinite than others. For as among beings some are truer than others, and possess more of real being in proportion as they approach nearer to Being itself, — at the same time that they are all in a certain respect beings — so infinities possess more of infinity as they approach nearer to the Infinite itself. Thus, for instance, Eternity possesses

bounds itself, it will not be infinite to itself, nor much less to the natures above it, since it has a portion of the infinity which is in them. For the powers of more total or universal natures are more infinite because they are more universal, and rank nearer to the first infinity.<sup>34</sup>

infinity more truly than time, though time also is infinite; because the infinity of Eternity is a stable, indivisible life, but the infinity of time consists in an unceasing progression, or as it were an unwearied pursuit of infinity, which it can alone obtain in an extended and partible manner. And this difference among infinities extends even to matter itself, which is the most degraded and abject of all infinities, because it is infinite only in the most dormant capacity. ♦T.

[71]

#### PROPOSITION XCIV.

**Every perpetuity is indeed a certain infinity, but not every infinity is a perpetuity.**

For there are many infinities which have the infinite not on account of *the always*, — such, for instance, as the infinity according to magnitude, the infinity according to multitude, and the infinity of matter: and whatever else there may be of the like kind which is infinite, either because it cannot be passed over, or through the indefiniteness of its essence. That perpetuity, however, is a certain infinity is evident: for that which never fails is infinite. But this is that which always has an inexhaustible hypostasis or nature. Infinity, therefore, is prior to perpetuity. For that which constitutes a greater number of effects, and is more universal, is more causal. Hence the first infinity is beyond eternity, and infinity itself is prior to eternity.<sup>35</sup>

35. On the Infinite and Infinity, see Plotinus: En. II. 4.

#### PROPOSITION XCV.

**Every power which is more single is more infinite than that which is multiplied.**

For if the first infinity is nearest to The One, of powers that power which is more allied to The One is in a greater degree infinite than that which recedes from it. For, being multiplied, it loses its uniform nature, abiding in which it possessed a transcendence with respect to other powers, because it was contained

therein by reason of its impartibility. For in partible natures themselves the powers when congregated are united; but when divided they are increased in number, and become obscured. [72]

## PROPOSITION XCVI.

**The power of every finite body, which is infinite, is incorporeal.**

For if it was corporeal, if this body indeed is finite, the infinite will be contained in the finite. But if the body is infinite, it will not be power so far as it is body. For if so far as it is body it is finite, but power is infinite, it will not be power so far as it is body. Hence the power which is infinite in a finite body is incorporeal.

## PROPOSITION XCVII.

**Every archical cause in each series or causal chain imparts to the whole series its characteristic; and that which the cause is primarily, the series is according to diminution.**<sup>36</sup>

For if it is the leader of the whole series, and all co-ordinate natures are co-arranged with reference to it, it is evident that it imparts to all in the series the one idea according to which they are placed in that series. For either all things partake of similitude to this cause without a cause, or that which is the same in all emanates from it. But that the participation should be without a [73] cause is impossible: for that which is without a cause is likewise fortuitous. But the fortuitous does not happen in things in which there is order, connection, and an invariable sameness of subsistence. From the principal cause, therefore, every series receives the characteristic of the hypostasis or nature of that cause. But if so, it is evident that it receives this characteristic with a descent and decrement adapted to secondary natures. For either the characteristic exists similarly in the leader, and the natures which are secondary, and in this case in what way would the principal cause be the leader, and the secondary natures be allotted an hypostasis after the leader? Or, it exists dissimilarly. And if this be so, it is evident that sameness emanates to the multitude from one, but not *vice versa*: and that the characteristic of the series which primarily preexists in one (the leader), is secondary in the multitude.

36. "But as there are many genera of Gods emanating from the power of Zeus, the father of all, truly each is allotted a place in the Homeric chain, and all are referred to Zeus and all depend on him, who is a much more beautiful chain than that golden one, or any other which one may imagine." ♦ Aristides: Oration I. p 6, Vol. I. ed. Dindorf.

"Try me if such be your will: — all ye Gods join together and prove me! Letting the golden chain — that encompasses all — from the heavens, Down; and with strength united, attempt, if ye can, to subvert me! Vain were the fruitless toil:— strive all as ye may, ye succeed not: Zeus is the highest still — despite your attempts to remove him! But, if I will to move, without effort I drag you before me; Drag you aloft with ease, wide earth and the depths of the ocean;

Binding the links of the chain  
to a peak of the mighty  
Olympus:  
Leaving the chain, and all, in  
the firmament swinging  
before me.  
Such, and so strong, do I rule:  
— over Gods as I rule over  
mortals. ♦ Homer: The Iliad,  
VIII. 18-26 (Dart's  
translation).

[See illustration in appendix.]

### **PROPOSITION XCVIII.**

**Every separate cause is at one and the same time  
everywhere and nowhere.**

For by the importance of its own power it is everywhere. For this is a cause which replenishes the natures which are naturally adapted to participate of it, rules over all secondary beings, and is present to all things by the prolific progressions of its illuminations. But by an essence unmingled with things in place, and by its exempt purity, it is nowhere. For if it is separate, it is established above all things. In a similar manner, likewise, it is in no one of the natures inferior to itself. For if it was alone everywhere, it would not indeed be prevented from being a cause, and from subsisting in all its participants: but it would not be prior to all of them in a separate manner. If likewise it was nowhere without being everywhere, it would not indeed be prevented from being prior to all things, and from [74] being nothing pertaining to subordinate natures. But it would not be in all things, since causes are naturally adapted to be in their effects by the abundant and unenvying importances of themselves. In order, therefore, that, existing as a cause it may be in all things which are able to partake of it, and that being separate in itself it may be prior to all the natures which are filled by it, it is everywhere and at the same time nowhere.

And it is not indeed partly everywhere and partly nowhere. For thus it would be divulsed and separate from itself, if one part of it was everywhere in all things, but another was nowhere and prior to all things. But the whole of it is everywhere, and in a similar manner nowhere. For the things which are able to participate of it meet with the whole of it, and find the

whole present to themselves, while at the same time it is wholly exempt from them. For the participant does not place this separate cause in itself, but participates of it to the extent of its capacity. Nor by the impartance of itself does it become contracted by the multitude of the participations of it: for it is separate. Nor do its participants participate of it defectively; for that which imparts is everywhere.

## PROPOSITION XCIX.

**Every imparticipable, so far as it is imparticipable, is not constituted by another cause. But it is itself the principle and cause of all its participants; and thus every principle in each causal chain is unbegotten.**<sup>37</sup>

For if it is imparticipable in its own series or chain [75] it is allotted the principality, and does not proceed from other things. For it would no longer be the first, if it received this characteristic, according to which it is imparticipable, from another. But if it is inferior to other things, and proceeds from them, it does not proceed from them so far as it is imparticipable, but so far as it participates. For of the things from which it originates it doubtless participates, and these things do not exist primarily: but that which is imparticipable exists primarily. Hence it is not from a cause so far as it is imparticipable. For so far as it is from a cause it participates, and is not imparticipable. But so far as it is imparticipable it is the cause of things which are participated, and is not itself a participant of other things.<sup>38</sup>

37. Hence as all things proceed from *the Ineffable* that which is imparticipable proceeds also from it, yet not as from a cause, but as from that which is better than cause. The procession, therefore, of the imparticipable from the Ineffable is

αρρητος εκφανσις, *an ineffable evolution into light.*

◆T.

[See illustration in appendix.]

38. See Plotinus: En. V. 5. 9 sq; En. VI. 9. 4 sq.

## PROPOSITION C.

**Every chain of wholes is extended to an imparticipable cause and principle: but all imparticipables depend on the one principle of all things.**<sup>39</sup>

For if each chain suffers a certain sameness, there is in each a certain leader, the cause of this sameness. For as all beings are from one, so every chain is from one. But, again, all imparticipable monads are referred to The One; because all of them are analogous to The One. So far, therefore, as they likewise suffer something which is the same through an analogy to The One, so far a reduction of them to The One is effected. And so far, indeed, as all of them are from The One, no one of these is a principle, but they emanate from

39. See Plotinus: En. V. 3. 12 sq.



that as from a principle: but so far as each is imparticipable, so far each is a principle. Hence, since they are the principles of certain things, they depend on the principle of all things: for that is the principle of all [76] things of which all things participate. All things however alone participate of the first; but of other things not all but certain things participate. Hence likewise The One is simply the first, but other things are firsts with reference to a certain thing, but are not firsts simply.

## PROPOSITION CI.

**Imparticipable intellect is the leader of all things which participate of intellect, imparticipable life of all things, which participate of life, and imparticipable being of all things which participate of being. And of these, being is prior to life, but life is prior to intellect.**

For because in each causal chain of beings imparticipables are prior to things which are participated, it is necessary that intellect should be prior to intellectuals, that life should be prior to vital natures, and that being itself should be prior to beings.

Because however that which is the cause of more effects precedes that which is the cause of fewer, hence among these being will be the first; for it is present to all things to which life and intellect are present. For every thing which lives and participates of intelligence necessarily *is*; but not *vice versa*. For many beings neither live, nor energize intellectually. But life is the second. For all things which participate of intellect participate likewise of life, but not vice versa. For many things indeed live, but are destitute of knowledge. And intellect is the third. For every thing which is in any manner whatsoever gnostic, likewise lives and is. If therefore being is the cause of more effects, but life of fewer, and intellect of still fewer, being is the first in the causal order, life the second, and intellect the third.<sup>40</sup>

40. Compare Aristot. *De Anima* I. 5. III. 4. et Joan. Philoponi *Com. Prooemium*; Plotinus: *En.* V. 5. 1 sq., *En.* VI. 5. 5 sq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 25, II. 11.; Porphyrii *Sententt.* cap. XV. sqq.; Iamblichus *De Mysteriis Aegyptt.* I. 7 et Galeus in *notis* p. 190.

[77]

## PROPOSITION CII.

**All beings which exist in any manner whatsoever consist of bound and the infinite through that which is primarily being. But all living beings are motive or active of themselves through the first life. And all**

**gnostic beings participate of knowledge through the first intellect.**

For if that which is impartible in each causal chain imparts its own characteristic to all the natures under the same chain, it is evident that the first being likewise imparts to all things both bound and infinity, since it is itself primarily mixed from these. Life likewise imparts to all things the motion or activity which it possesses in itself. For life is the first progression and motion from the stable hypostasis or nature of being. And intellect imparts knowledge to all things: for the summit of all knowledge is in intellect, and intellect is the first gnostic nature.

### **PROPOSITION CIII.**

**All things are in all, but each is appropriately in each.**

For in being there are life and intellect; and in life being and thought; and in intellect being and life. But in intellect, indeed, all things subsist intellectually, in life vitally, and in being all things are truly beings. For since every thing subsists either according to cause, or according to hyparxis, or according to participation; and since in the first the others are according to cause; in the second the first is according to participation, and the third according to cause; and in the third the natures prior to it are according to participation, — this being the case, life and intellect have a prior or causal subsistence in being. Since, however, each thing is characterized according to hyparxis, and neither according to cause (for cause deals with effects,) nor according to participation (for that is external of which a thing participates,) [78] — hence in being there are truly life and thought, essential life and essential intellect. And in life there is being indeed according to participation, but thought according to cause. Each of these, however, subsists there vitally: for the hyparxis is according to life. And in intellect life and essence subsist according to participation, and each of these subsists there intellectually. For the being or essence of intellect is gnostic, and life is knowledge.

### **PROPOSITION CIV.**

**Every thing which is primarily eternal has both an eternal essence and activity.**

For if it primarily participates of the perpetuity of eternity, it does not partially participate of it, but entirely. For either it participates of it in activity, but not in essence. This however is impossible: since in this case energy would be more excellent than essence. Or, it participates of it according to essence, but does not participate of it according to activity. In this case, however, that which is primarily eternal, and that which primarily participates of time, will be the same. And time, indeed, will primarily measure the essence of certain things, but eternity which is more excellent than all time will not measure the essence of any thing, if that which is primarily eternal is not essentially contained by eternity. Hence every thing which is primarily eternal has both an eternal essence and activity.

### **PROPOSITION CV.**

**Every thing immortal is perpetual; but not every thing perpetual is immortal.**

For if the immortal is that which always participates of life, but that which always participates of life participates likewise of being, and that which always lives always [79] *is*, — hence everything immortal is perpetual. But the immortal is that which is unreceptive of death, and always lives: and the perpetual is that which is unreceptive of non-being, and always is. If, however, there are many beings more or less excellent than life which are unreceptive of death but exist always, — not every thing therefore which is perpetual is immortal. That, however, there are many beings not immortal which exist always, is evident. For there are certain beings, indeed, which are destitute of life, but which exist always, and are indestructible. For as being is related to life, so is the perpetual to the immortal. For the life which cannot be taken away is immortal, and the being which cannot be taken away is perpetual. But being is more comprehensive than life, and therefore the perpetual is more comprehensive than the immortal.<sup>41</sup>

41. See Aristot. Topicc. IV. 5. et VI. 3.; Plotinus En. III. 1.1 sq., En. III. 7. 1 sq.; Platonis Phaedon. p. 105 D, and annotation of Wyttenbaeh, p. 280 sqq.

### **PROPOSITION CVI.**

**Between every thing which is entirely eternal both in essence and activity, and every thing which has its essence in time, the medium, is that which is partly eternal and partly measured by time.**

For that which has its essence comprehended by time

is entirely temporal, and by a much greater priority this will be allotted a temporal activity. But that which is entirely temporal is in every respect dissimilar to that which is entirely eternal. But all causal progressions are through similars. Hence there is something between these. The medium, therefore, is either that which is eternal in essence, but temporal in activity, or vice versa. This latter, however, is impossible: for in that case activity would be more excellent than essence. [80] It follows therefore that the medium is the former of these.

### **PROPOSITION CVII.**

**Every thing which is partly eternal and, partly temporal is at one and the same time being and generation.**

For every thing eternal is being, and that which is measured by time is generation: so that if the same thing participates of time and eternity, yet not according to the same, it will be both being and generation, but not both according to one of these alone.<sup>42</sup>

42. As to the argument, see Platonis Timaeum p. 27 sq.; Aristot. De Generat. et Corrupt. I. 3.; Plutarch, advers. Colotem, p. 547 sq. Wytttenb. et Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XIII. et XIV.

*Corollary.*— From these things it is evident that generation, indeed, having a temporal essence depends on that which partly partakes of being and partly of generation, participating at once of eternity and time. But this is related to that which is in every respect eternal: and that which is in every respect eternal is related to being which is prior to the eternal.

### **PROPOSITION CVIII.**

**Every thing which is partial in each order is able to participate in a twofold respect of the monad which is in the proximately superior order, viz. either through its own wholeness, or through that which is partial in the superior order and co-ordinate with the thing according to an analogy to the whole causal chain.**

For if the return to all things is through similitude, that which is partial in an inferior order is dissimilar to that which is monadic and a whole in a superior order; and is as that which is partial to a whole, and as one order to another. But a partial nature is similar to a whole of the same causal chain through a [81] communion of characteristic, and to the proximately superior co-ordinate characteristic through an analogous hypostasis

or nature. It is evident, therefore, that through these media a return from one to the other is effected, as through similars to that which is similar. For the one is similar as the partial to that which is partial, but the other as that which is the appropriate of the same chain. But the whole of the superior chain is dissimilar in both these respects.

### PROPOSITION CIX.

**Every partial or particular intellect participates of the Primal Unity which is above intellect, both through the Universal Intellect and through the partial unity which is co-ordinate with it. And every partial soul participates of Universal Intellect through Universal Soul, and through a partial intellect. And every partial nature of body participates of Universal Soul through Universal Mature, and a partial soul.**

For every thing partial participates of the monad which is in a superior order, either through its characteristic wholeness (universality) or through that which is partial in that order, and which is co-ordinate with the partial nature.<sup>43</sup>

43. As to the argument, see Plotinus: En. VI. 2. 4. sqq., and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* II. 1.

### PROPOSITION CX.

**Of all the things which are arranged in each causal chain, those which are first and are conjoined with their monad are able to participate of the natures which are proximately established in the superior causal chain through analogy. But those which are more imperfect and remote from their proper principle are not naturally adapted to enjoy these natures.**

For because the things which are first are allied to [82] those in a superior series, being allotted a better and more divine nature in the order to which they belong, but the things which are more imperfect proceed further from their principle, and are allotted a secondary and ministrant but not a primary and leading progression in the whole causal chain, — this being the case, the former are necessarily connascently conjoined to the things in a superior order; but the latter are unable to be conjoined with them. For all things are not of an equal dignity, though they may belong to the same order. For neither is there one and the same ratio in all: but all things proceed from their

proper monad as from one and return to one. Hence they are not allotted the same power. But some things are able to receive proximately the participations of superior natures; but others, by reason of their distant progressions from their principles, are deprived of a power of this kind.

### PROPOSITION CXI.

**Of every intellectual causal chain some are divine intellects, receiving the participations of the Gods; but others are intellects alone. And of every psychical chain some are intellectual souls, which depend on their proper intellects; but others are souls alone.<sup>44</sup> And of every corporeal nature some have souls supernally presiding over them, but others are natures alone, destitute of the presence of souls.**

For of each causal chain not the whole genus is naturally adapted to depend on that which is prior to itself, but only that which is more perfect in it, and fit to be connascent with superior natures. Neither, therefore, is every intellect attached to a deity, but those intellects only which are supreme and most single: for [83] these are cognate to the divine unities. Nor do all souls participate of participable intellect, but those only which are most intellectual. Nor do all corporeal natures enjoy the presence of soul, and of the soul which is participated, but those only which are more perfect, and possess in a greater degree the form of reason. And this is the mode of demonstration in all.

### PROPOSITION CXII.

**Of every order those things which are primal have the form of the natures prior to them.**

For the highest genera in each order are conjoined through similitude to the natures which are above them, and through the connexion of the progression of wholes the subject are conjoined to the superior natures. Hence such as the superior natures are primarily, such likewise is the form which these highest genera are allotted, and which is cognate to the nature of those in the superior order. Likewise they appear to be, through the characteristic of their subsistence, such as the natures which are prior to them.

44. See Plat. Phaedr. p. 247 sq.; Hermiae Commentar. p. 134 sqq. ed. Cuvreur; Aristot. De Anima III. 4. cum Jo. Philoponi Commentar.; Plotinus: En. IV. 1.; Proclus in Plat. Tim. p. 74 sq. et Porphyrii Sententt. cap.

I ♦ XI.

### PROPOSITION CXIII.

#### **Every divine number is unical.**

For if a divine number has a precedaneous cause, viz. The One, just as an intellectual number has intellect, and a psychical number soul, and if multitude is every where analogous to its cause, it is evident that a divine number is unical, since The One is God. But this follows, since The One and The Good are the same; for The Good and God are the same. For that beyond which there is nothing, and which all things desire, is God. And likewise that from which all things proceed, and to which all things tend, is The Good. If therefore there is a multitude of Gods, the multitude is [84] unical. But that there is a multitude of Gods (divine unities) is evident: for every archical cause is the leader of an appropriate multitude which is similar and cognate to the cause.<sup>45</sup>

45. See Plotinus: En. V. Lib. I. 5.; Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XXXVIII.; Proclus in Plat. Theolog. Lib. IV. 29; Theologumena Arithmeticae, p. 4 sq. ed. Ast.; Jo. Laur. Lydus De Mensibus, Lib. II. cap. 4., and Additional Notes.

### PROPOSITION CXIV.

#### **Every God is a self-perfect unity, and every self-perfect unity is a God.**

For if the number of unities is two fold, as has been demonstrated, and some are self-perfect, but others are illuminations from the self-perfect unities, and if a divine number is allied to and connatural with The One and The Good, the Gods are self-perfect unities. And, vice versa, if there is a self-perfect unity it is a God. For as unity is in the most eminent degree allied to The One, and the self-perfect to The Good, so likewise according to both of these the self-perfect participates of the divine peculiarity and is a God. But if a God was a unity, yet not a self-perfect unity, or a self-perfect hypostasis, yet not a unity, he would be arranged in another order, on account of the mutation of the peculiarity.

### PROPOSITION CXV.

#### **Every God is super essential, supervital, and superintellectual.**

For if each is a self-perfect unity, but neither essence, life, or intellect is a unity, but that which is united, it is evident that every God is beyond each of these, viz., essence, life, and intellect. For if these differ from each other, but all are in all, each of these being all will not be one only. Further, if the first God is superessential, [85] but every God is of the primary causal chain, so

46. See Additional Notes.

far as it is a God, each will be superessential. But that the first God is superessential, is evident.<sup>46</sup> For essence is not the same with unity, nor is to exist the same thing as to be united. If, however, these are not the same, either the first God is both of these, and in this case he will not be one only, but something else besides The One, and will participate of unity, but will not be The One itself, — or, he is one of these. But if indeed he is essence, he will be indigent of The One. It is, however, impossible that The Good and The First should be indigent. Hence he is one alone, and therefore superessential. But if each thing imparts the peculiarity of that which it is primarily to the whole causal chain [of which it is the leader], every divine number is superessential; since every archical cause produces similars prior to dissimilars. If, therefore, the first God is superessential, all the Gods will be superessential: for they will be entirely similar to the First. Since, however, they are likewise essences they will be produced from the first essence, as the monads of essences.

## PROPOSITION CXVI.

### Every deity except The One is participable.

For that The One is imparticipable is evident, since if it was participated, and thereby related to another, it would no longer be similarly the cause of all things, of both primary and secondary beings. But that the other unities are participated, we shall thus demonstrate. For if there is another imparticipable unity after the First, in what will it differ from The One? For either it subsists in the same manner as that; and in this case how is the one the second, but the other first? Or it does not subsist in the same manner: and thus one of these will be The One [86] itself, but the other *one* and *not one*. This *non-one*, likewise, if it is no hypostasis whatever will be *one* alone. But if it is a certain hypostasis other than The One, in this case The One will be participated by the *non-one*: and that will be a self-perfect one which conjoins the non-one with The One. So that again God will be this [viz. the one] so far as he is God. But that which is non-one will subsist in the participation of The One. Every unity, therefore, which subsists after The One is participable, and every God is participable.<sup>47</sup>

47. See Plotinus: En. V. 5. 12 sq., and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 19. II. 4.

## PROPOSITION CXVII.

48. See the Theaetetus, p. 152 A; the Cratylus, p. 386 A;



### **Every God is the measure of beings.**

For if every God is unical, he defines and measures all the multitude of beings. For all multitudes, since they are in their own nature indefinite, are bounded through The One. But that which is unical, measuring and determining the natures to which it is present, leads into bound that which by its own power is not bounded. For the unical has the form of The One by participation. But that which is uniform recedes from indefiniteness and infinity: and the more uniform it is the less is it indefinite, and without measure. Every multitude of beings, therefore, is measured by the divine unities.<sup>48</sup>

Aristot. *Metaphys.* III. 5., and Plotinus: *En.* VI. 8. 17.

The basis of this Proposition is Plato *De Legg.* IV. p. 716: "But God is specially to us the measure of all things — much more indeed than any man, according to the opinion of the vulgar." Plato refers to the childish notion of Protagoras, which was an echo of the belief of the multitude, that "man is the measure of all things."

Proclus acutely observes: "the argument of Protagoras is this: if such as things appear to be to every man such they are, the wise will not exist, but only the foolish. But the second assertion is not true, neither therefore is the first." (*Scholia on the Cratylus*, no. XXXVIII.) This and other equally irrational notions, such as "might makes right," ought to have sunk into utter oblivion by reason of their essential absurdity, inanity, and weakness, but they reappear even in this enlightened (?) century, branded as "new," "up-to-date," "scientific thought," etc. The people who hold and disseminate these sensuous chimeras are ignorantly called "advanced thinkers." In truth they are neither "advanced" nor "thinkers." All their "thinking" is done on the animal plane. Unable to apprehend the eternal and immutable ideas, which are perennially fresh and ever valid, these philosophasters are reviving antiquated opinions which were exploded and refuted

[87]

### PROPOSITION CXVIII.

**Every thing which is in the Gods pre-exists in them according to their peculiarities. And the peculiarity of the Gods is unical and super essential. Hence all things are contained in them unically and superessentially.**

For if everything subsists in a three-fold manner, viz. either according to cause, or according to hyparxis, or according to participation, but the first number of all things is the divine number, nothing will be in the Gods according to participation, but all things will subsist in them either according to hyparxis, or according to cause. The things, however, which they antecedently contain because they are the causes of all things, they antecedently contain in a manner appropriate to their own union. For every being which is the leader of secondary natures causally, contains the cause of things subordinate in a way naturally adapted to itself. All things, therefore, are in the Gods unically and superessentially.<sup>49</sup>

49. See Plotinus: En. VI. 8. 18 sqq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 24. III. 1.; Porphyrii *Sententt.* cap. XXXVIII.; Iamblichus *De Mysteriis Aegyptt.* VIII. 2.

[88]

### PROPOSITION CXIX.

**Every God subsists through its own superessential goodness, and is good neither through participation, nor through essence, but superessentially; since habits and essences are allotted a secondary and remote order from the Gods.**

For if the first God is The One and The Good, and so far as he is The One he is likewise The Good, and so far as he is The Good he is likewise The One, if this be the case, every causal chain of the Gods is uniform and boniform according to one peculiarity, and each of the Gods is not a unity and goodness according to any other thing. But each so far as he is a unity is a goodness, and so far as he is a goodness is a unity. To the degree, likewise, that the Gods posterior to the first God proceed from the First they are boniform and uniform, since the First is The One and The Good: but as Gods they are all unities and goodnesses.

As, therefore, *the one* of the Gods is superessential, so likewise is their goodness, since it is no other than *the one*. For each of them is no other than *the good*, but is good alone; as neither is each any other than *the one*, but is one alone.<sup>50</sup>

50. See Plotinus: En, I. 7. 1 sq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 15. I. 23.

## On Providence.

### PROPOSITION CXX.

**Every God has in lots own essence a providence of the whole of things. And a providential activity is primarily in the Gods.**

For all other things which are posterior to the Gods, act providentially through the participation of them: but providence is connascent with the Gods. For [89] if to impart good to the subjects of providential activity is the prerogative of the providential peculiarity, but all the Gods are goodnesses, either they do not impart themselves to anything, and thus nothing will be good in secondary natures. And whence will that be derived which subsists according to participation, except from those natures which primarily possess peculiarities? Or, if they do impart themselves they impart good, and because of this providentially attend to all things. Providence, therefore, subsists primarily in the Gods. For where is the activity which is prior to intellect, except in superessential natures? But providence (πρὸ νοῦ), as the name signifies, is an energy or activity prior to intellect (ἐνεργεῖα ἐστὶ πρὸ νοῦ). The Gods, therefore, by reason of their essence, and because they are goodnesses, provide for all things, filling all things with the goodness which is prior to intellect.<sup>51</sup>

51. We may further infer the necessity of Providence in the Gods from considering that as they are the productive causes of all things, so all things abide and are radically established in their natures. For where can any thing subsist, which is not contained in their unknown and all-pervading comprehensions? But if this be the case, since all things are in reality the offspring of the Gods they must continually be the objects of their providential exertions. For as goodness is the characteristic of these divine natures, it is impossible that they should abandon their progeny, or cease to impart their beneficent, unenvying, and all-powerful communications. Nor must we think that these providential exertions are laborious to the Gods, — since, as Proclus well observes, (*Theol. Plat.* p. 41), "that which is according to nature is not laborious to any thing: for neither is it laborious to fire to impart heat, nor to snow to refrigerate, nor to bodies themselves to energize according to their peculiar powers. Nor, prior to bodies, is it laborious to natures themselves to nourish, or generate, or increase: for these are the works of natures. Nor again, prior to these, is it laborious to souls to exert

their peculiar energies: for many of their energies are attended with delight, many are the result of their essence, and many motions are produced by their presence alone." Hence if the communication of good naturally belongs to the Gods, Providence also is natural to these divinities, which they exert in a tranquil, unpolluted, and incorporeal manner.

Should it be inquired in what manner Providence operates, the following beautiful passage from Proclus *On the Parmenides*, as cited by Ficinus [Ficino] in his commentary on that dialogue, will give us abundant satisfaction: "Let us conceive a ship agitated by the winds and waves, and let us suppose that the imagination of some one is so powerful that while he imagines the sea, the sea immediately flows; that while he imagines the ship, the ship is constructed; and that the winds and waves arise agreeable to his imagination, and as the consequences of its vehement energy. Now it is evident that such a one would not be compelled in surveying these particulars to employ a confused and distracted vision, but both his knowledge and operation would equally subsist in a uniform manner. And such is the simplicity of Divine Intelligence with respect to the intuition and fabrication of inferior concerns." ♦ T.

## PROPOSITION CXXI.

**Every divine nature has for its essence goodness, but a unical power, and a knowledge arcane and incomprehensible by all secondary natures.**

For if it is provident of the whole of things, there is in it a power dominating the subjects of its providential activity; through which power, unsubdued and uncircumscribed by all things, divine natures fill all things with, and subject all things to, themselves. For every archical cause of other things, and which is dominative of them through abundance of power, rules and dominates according to nature.

The first power, therefore, is in the Gods, not indeed dominating some things but not others, but equally comprehending in itself primarily the powers of all beings, this power neither being essential nor much less unessential, but connascent with the hyparxis of the Gods, and superessential. Moreover, the boundaries of all cognitions presubstist uniformly in the Gods. For through divine knowledge, which is exempt from the whole of things, all other cognitions substist; which divine [91] cognition is neither intellectual, nor much less a certain knowledge posterior to intellect, but is established according to the divine characteristic above intellect. If, therefore, there is a divine knowledge, this knowledge is arcane and uniform: and if there is a power uncircumscribed by all things, this power is in a similar manner comprehensive of all things. If, likewise, there is a divine goodness, this goodness defines the hyparxis of the Gods: since, if all things are in the Gods, knowledge, power, and goodness are likewise in them. But their hyparxis is characterized by that which is most excellent, and their hypostasis or nature likewise is according to that which is best. But this is goodness.<sup>52</sup>

52. Compare the *Philebus*, p. 64 sqq.; the *Timaeus*, p. 29 sq.; Plotinus: *En.* I. 7. 1. sq., *En.* V. 9. 2.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* V. 17.

## PROPOSITION CXXII.

**Every divine nature provides for secondary natures, and is exempt from the subjects of its providential care, providence neither remitting the pure and unical transcendancy of that which is divine, nor a separate union abolishing providence.**

For divine beings abiding in their unical nature, and in their own hyparxis, fill all things with the power of

themselves. And every thing which is able to participate of them enjoys the good which it is capable of receiving, according to the measures of its own hypothesis; divine natures in the mean time illuminating all things by their very being, or rather prior to being. For since they are no other than goodness, they supply without envy all things with an abundance of good, by their very being, not making a distribution according to a reasoning process; things receiving indeed according to their worth, and divine natures imparting according to their hyparxis. Neither, therefore, in providing [92] for other things do the Gods receive a habitude or alliance with the subjects of their providential care: for they benefit all things by being *that which they are*. But every nature which makes by its very essence, makes without habitude, [and with an unrestrained energy], since habitude is an addition to essence. Hence likewise it is preternatural. Nor because they are separate do the Gods withdraw their providential care: for thus they would subvert — which it is not lawful to say — their own hyparxis, the characteristic of which is goodness. For it is the province of goodness to extend itself to every thing which is able to participate of it. And the greatest is not that which is boniform, but that which is beneficent (the doer of good). Either, therefore, no being will possess this beneficent nature, or the Gods will possess this beneficent nature, or the Gods will possess it prior to beings. For it is not possible that a greater good should be present to the natures which are good by participation, but a less good to those which are primarily good.

### PROPOSITION CXXIII.

**Every divine nature is itself, by reason of its superessential union, ineffable and unknown to all secondary natures; but it is comprehended and known by its participants. Hence that which is First is alone entirely unknown, because it is imparticipable.**

For all knowledge which arises through reasoning deals with beings, and in beings possesses the apprehension of truth, since it comes into contact with conceptions, and subsists in intellections. But the Gods are beyond all beings. Neither, therefore, is that which is divine the object of opinion, nor can it be apprehended by the dianoetic power, or by intellection. For every being is either sensible, and therefore the object [93] of opinion; or truly existing being, and therefore the object of intellect, or it is between these, existing as

53. Compare Plotinus: En. VI. 8. 7 sq.; Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XXVI.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* V. 28., and Commentary of Olympiodorus on the First Alcibiades, p. 133, ed. Creuzer.

The reader must remember

being and at the same time as generated, and therefore the object of the dianoetic power (discursive reason). If, therefore, the Gods are superessential, and subsist prior to beings, they cannot be apprehended by either opinion, or by science and discursive reason, or by intelligence. But the nature of their peculiarities is known by the beings which depend on them: and this by a necessary consequence. For the differences of participants are co-divided conformably to the peculiarities of the participated natures. And neither does every thing participate of every thing: for there is no coordination of things perfectly dissimilar. Nor does any casual thing participate of that which is casual. But that which is kindred is conjoined to that which is kindred, and proceeds from that to which it is allied.<sup>53</sup>

that the Gods are alone superessential through their *unities*, which are the characteristics of their natures: for as irrationality is the essential signature of a brute, and rationality of a man, so a divine unity is the invariable characteristic of a God. ♦T.

#### PROPOSITION CXXIV.

**Every God knows partible natures impartibly, temporal natures without time, things which are not necessary necessarily, mutable natures immutably; and, summarily, all things in a manner more excellent than the order of things known.**

For if every thing which is with the Gods is with them according to their characteristic, it is evident that the knowledge in the Gods of things inferior will not subsist according to the nature of the inferior [94] things, but according to the exempt transcendence of the Gods. Hence their knowledge of multiplied and passive natures will be uniform and impassive. If, therefore, the object of knowledge is partible, divine knowledge will be impartible. If the objects which are known are mutable, the knowledge of the Gods will be immutable; if they are contingent, they will be known by the Gods necessarily; and if they are indefinite, definitely. For that which is divine does not receive knowledge from subordinate beings in such a way that the knowledge is of the same nature as that of the thing known. But subordinate beings become indefinite and uncertain about the definite nature of the Gods, are changed about their immutability, receive passively that which is impassive in them, and temporally that which in them is without time. For it is possible for subordinate to be surpassed by more excellent natures; but it is not lawful for the Gods to receive any thing from beings inferior to themselves.<sup>54</sup>

54. For an unfolding of the argument of this Proposition see the *Phaedrus*, p. 247 and the *Commentary of Hermias*; the *Philebus*, p. 61; Plotinus: *En. V. 8. 4.*, *En. VI. 7. 36*; and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* pp. 54, 282, 294, 306, 308.

## PROPOSITION CXXV.

**Every God, from that order from, which he began to unfold himself into light, proceeds through all secondary natures, always indeed multiplying and dividing the importances of himself, but preserving the characteristic of his own hypostasis.**

For progressions becoming through diminution, first natures are every where in a certain manner multiplied into the decrements of secondary natures. But these proceeding according to a similitude to their producing causes receive their orderly distribution, so that the whole of that which proceeds is in a manner the same [95] with and different from that which abides; through its diminution indeed appearing to be different, but through continuity with its cause not departing from sameness with it. But such as that which abides is among first, such as that which proceeds is among secondary natures; and thus an indissoluble communion of the causal chain is preserved. Each of the Gods, therefore, is unfolded into light appropriately in the orders in which he makes his evolution.<sup>55</sup> But he proceeds from thence as far as to the last of things, through the generative power of primary natures. He is always, however, multiplied through a progression from unity into multitude. But he preserves identity in the progression, through the similitude of the things which proceed to the leader and primary cause of each causal chain.

55. The source of this is in the Phaedrus, p. 246: "Zeus, the mighty leader in heaven, driving a winged chariot, heads the divine procession, disposing and presiding over all things; and after him follows an army of Gods and daemons, distributed into eleven divisions." Read the illuminating comment of Hermeias, and the notes of Ast, on this passage. Lamprias in Plutarch (Sympos. IX. 5.) says that Plato "calls the intelligible nature of the heaven a winged chariot, the harmonious revolution of the universe." Plotinus, (En. V. 8. 10.), says: "Wherefore Zeus himself, who is the most ancient of the other Gods, whom he leads, proceeds first to the contemplation of the intelligible world; and the other Gods, daemons and souls, who are able to perceive these transcendently lucid objects, follow him." Add Plotinus: En. III. 2. 1.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* IV. 16.; Damascius Περὶ Ἀρχῶν.

## PROPOSITION CXXVI.

**Every God who is nearer to The One is more universal, but the God who is more remote from it is more particular.**

For the God who is the cause of more effects is nearer to that which produces all things; but he who is the cause of fewer is more remote from it. And he indeed



who is the cause of many effects is more universal; [96] but he who is the cause of fewer is more particular. And each, indeed, is a unity; but the one is greater and the other less in power. The more partial Gods likewise are generated from the more universal: the latter not being divided, since they are unities; nor changed in quality, because they are immovable; nor multiplied by habitude, for they are unmingled. But from themselves, through an abundance of power, they generate secondary progressions, which are the decrements of the natures prior to them.

### **PROPOSITION CXXVII.**

**Every divine nature, since it is simple, is specially primary, and on this account is most self-sufficient.**

For that it is simple is evident from its unity; since every divine nature is most unical. But a nature of this kind is transcendently simple. That it is likewise most sufficient to itself may be learned by considering that a composite nature is indigent, if not of other things to which it is external, yet of those things of which it is composed. But that which is most simple and unical, and which establishes itself in The Good, is most self-sufficient. Such, however, is every divine nature. Neither, therefore, is it indigent of other things, since it is goodness itself, nor of things requisite to composition, because it is unical.

### **PROPOSITION CXXVIII.**

**Every God, when participated by natures nearer to himself, is participated without a medium; but when -participated by natures more remote from himself, the participation is through fewer or more media.**

For the former, since they are uniform and self-existent through their cognation, are able to participate immediately of the divine unities; but the latter, through [97] their diminution and extension into multitude require other things which are more united, in order that they may participate of the unities themselves, and not of things united. For united multitude subsists between unity itself and divided multitude; being indeed able to coalesce with unity, but allied in a certain respect to divided multitude, through the appearance or image of multitude.

## PROPOSITION CXXIX.

**Every divine body is divine through a divine soul: every soul is divine through a divine intellect: and every intellect is divine through the participation of a divine unity. Unity indeed is of itself a God: intellect is most divine: soul is divine, but body is deiform.**

For if every number of the Gods is above intellect, but participations are effected through cognate and similar natures, the impartible essence will primarily participate of the superessential unities: secondarily the nature which comes into contact with generation will participate of them; and, thirdly, generation. Each of these likewise participates of them through the proximately superior natures: the peculiarity of the Gods indeed proceeding even to the last of things in its participants, but through media cognate to itself. For unity indeed imparts its transcendent power in divine concerns to the first intellect, and causes this intellect to be like itself according to unical multitude. But through intellect it is likewise present to soul, conjoining soul with intellect and co-inflaming it [with divine fire], when this intellect is participate. And through soul it imparts even to body an echo or resonance of its own peculiarity, if it is a body which participates in any respect of soul. And thus body becomes not only animated and intellectual, but likewise divine, receiving life and [98] motion from soul, indissoluble permanency from intellect, and divine union from the unity which is participated. For each of these imparts its own hyparxis to the subsequent nature.<sup>56</sup>

56. As to the argument, see the *Timaeus*, p. 30; Plotinus: *En. IV. 3. 21.*, *En. IV. 4. 9 sq.*; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* p. 126 sq.; Porphyrii *Sentent.* cap. 1 ♦ VII.

## PROPOSITION CXXX.

**In every divine order the things which are first are more exempt from the natures proximately arranged under them, than these latter are from things subsequent. And secondary natures are more dependent on their proximate superiors, than following natures are dependent on these.**

For the more unical and universal a nature is, the more is it allotted a greater transcendancy with respect to subsequent natures. And the more diminished it is in power, the more is it connascent with the natures posterior to itself. And the higher natures indeed are more united with their more principal causes; but inferior na-

tures are less united with them. For to be more exempt from subordinate natures, and to be more united to superior, implies a greater power: on the contrary, to recede in a greater degree from more excellent, and to be co-passive with subordinate natures, implies a diminution of power. And this happens to secondary, but not to primary natures, in every order of things.

### **PROPOSITION CXXXI.**

**Every God, begins his own activity from himself.**

For he first exhibits in himself the peculiarity of his presence to secondary natures, because he likewise imparts himself to other things according to his own exuberant plenitude. For neither does deficiency belong to the Gods, nor plenitude alone. For every thing deficient [99] is imperfect, and it is impossible that the imperfect should make another thing perfect. But that which is full is alone self-sufficient, and is not yet prepared to impart itself. It is necessary, therefore, that the nature which fills other things, and which extends to other things the impartances of itself should be super-plenary or exuberantly full. Hence if a divine nature fills all things from itself with the good which it contains in itself, each deity is exuberantly full. And if this be so, primarily possessing in itself the peculiarity which it imparts to others, it will extend to them the communications of super-plenary goodness.

### **PROPOSITION CXXXII.**

**All the orders of the Gods are bound in union by a medium.**

For all the progressions of beings are effected through similars; and much more will the orders of the Gods possess an indissoluble continuity, because they subsist uniformly, and are defined according to *the one*, which is the archical cause of their existence. The decrements, therefore, are produced unitedly, and alone according to the similitude in beings of secondary to primary natures. And this is so, because the hyparxis of the Gods much more consists in union than the subsistence of beings. All the divine genera, therefore, are bound together by appropriate media; and primary natures do not proceed into progressions perfectly different without a medium, but through the genera common to each, from which they proceed and

of which they are immediately the causes. For these congregate the extremes into one union, being spread under some things connascently, but proximately exempt from others: and they preserve the well-ordered progeny of divine natures. [100]

### **PROPOSITION CXXXIII.**

**Every God is a beneficent unity or an unific (ενοποιος) goodness; and each God so far as he is a deity has this hyparxis. The first God, however, is simply good, and simply one; but each posterior to the First is a certain goodness, and a certain unity.**

For the divine peculiarity distinguishes the unities and goodnesses of the Gods, so that each of the Gods benefits all things, according to a certain peculiarity of goodness, such as that of perfecting, containing, or defending: for each of these is a certain good, but not every good. But the First God pre-establishes a unical cause, and hence is The Good, which constitutes all goodness. For all the hyparxes of the Gods are not together equal to The One; so great a transcendency is the First God allotted with respect to the multitude of the Gods.

### **PROPOSITION CXXXIV.**

**Every divine intellect knows as intellect, but acts providentially as a God.**

For it is the illustrious prerogative of intellect to know beings, and to have its perfection in intellections; but it is the province of a God to act providentially, and to fill all things with good. This impartance, however, and replenishing with good is accomplished through the union of the replenishing natures with the causes. prior to themselves; which union intellect likewise imitating passes into sameness with intelligibles. A divine intellect, therefore, so far as it acts providentially is a God; because providence is an activity prior to intellect. Hence as a God it imparts itself to all things, but as an intellect it is not present to all things: for a divine nature extends to things into which the intellectual peculiarity does not proceed. For beings which are without [101] intellect desire to act providentially, and to participate of a certain good. And the reason of this is because all things do not desire intellect, not even all which are able to

participate of it, but all things desire good, and hasten to obtain it.

#### **PROPOSITION CXXXV.**

**Every divine unity is participated by some being immediately; and every deified nature is extended to one divine unity. As many likewise as are the unities which are participated, so many are the genera of beings which participate.**

For neither two or more unities are participated by one being. For how, when the peculiarities in the unities are changed would that which is connascent with each unity remain unchanged, since contact becomes through similitude? Nor is one unity participated in a divided manner by many beings: for many beings are unable to be conjoined with unity, and as beings they are unconjoined with the unity which is prior to beings, and as *many* they are separated from unity. It is necessary, however, that the nature which participates should be partly similar to that which is participated, and partly different and dissimilar. Since, therefore, that which participates is one of beings, but unity is superessential, and according to this they are dissimilar, it is necessary that the participant should be one that thereby it may be similar to *the one* which is participated, though of these the latter is one in such a manner as to be unity, but the former so as to be passive to the one, and to be united through the participation of unity.

#### **PROPOSITION CXXXVI.**

**Every God who is more universal and ranks nearer to the First, is participated by a more universal genus of beings. But the God who is more partial and more remote from the First, is participated by a more partial genus of beings. And as being is related to being, so is unity to divine unity.<sup>57</sup>**

57. The source of the argument is in the Parmenides. See Plotinus: En. VI. 6. 9 sqq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* III. 1 sq.; III. 13.

For if there are as many beings as there are unities, and vice versa, and one unity is participated by one being, it is evident that the order of beings proceeds according to the order of the unities, being assimilated to the order prior to beings: and more universal beings are connascent with more universal unities, but more partial beings

with more partial unities. For if this were not the case, again similars would be conjoined with dissimilars, and there would not be a distribution according to worth. These things, however, are impossible: since from the divine unities the one and appropriate measure shines forth, and proceeds from them to all other natures. Much more, therefore, will there be an order of participation in these, similars depending on similars, according to power.

## **PROPOSITION CXXXVII.**

**Every unity with the one constitutes the being which participates of it.**

For The One, since it constitutes all things, so likewise it is the cause of the unities which are participated, and of the beings which depend on these unities. But the unity of every being produces the peculiarity which shines forth in that particular being. And The One indeed is the cause of being simply; but unity is the [103] cause of alliance, because it is connascent with The One. Hence unity is that which of itself defines the being which participates of it, and essentially exhibits in itself a superessential peculiarity or characteristic. For everywhere, from that which is primary that which is secondary is that which it is. If, therefore, there is a certain superessential peculiarity of deity, this likewise belongs to the being which participates of it essentially.

## **PROPOSITION CXXXVIII.**

**Of all the deified natures which participate of the divine peculiarity, the first and highest is Being itself.**

For if being is beyond intellect and life, as has been demonstrated, and if it is likewise after The One the cause of the greatest number of effects, being will be the highest deified nature. For it is more unical than life and intellect, and is on this account entirely more venerable. But there is no other prior to it except The One. For prior to unical multitude what else can there be than The One? But being is unical multitude, because it consists of bound and infinity. And, universally, superessential being is prior to essence:<sup>58</sup> since in the illuminations which are imparted to secondary natures, The One alone is beyond Being itself, being immediately after The One. For that which is being in capacity (power), but is not yet being in energy (activity), is nevertheless according to its own nature one: and after this follows the being which is now being in [104] energy. Hence in the principles of things non-being<sup>59</sup> is immediately beyond being, because it is something more excellent and no other than The One itself.<sup>60</sup>

58. For as Being itself is no other than the highest order of the Gods and the most uniform multitude, and as the characteristic of every God is a divine unity, hence the characteristic of Being itself will be the unity proceeding from bound. But as all the divine unities are superessential, hence Being itself according to its characteristic will be superessential. ♦ T.

59. For as matter is deservedly called non-being, because it is worse than all things; in like manner this appellation is proper to the First Cause, as he is better than all

things. ♦ T.

60. See the Parmenides, p. 157; the Philebus, p. 14 sq.; Plotinus: En. VI. 5. 1 sqq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* III. 7., IV. 27.; Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XXVII et XXXVIII.

### **PROPOSITION CXXXIX.**

**All things which participate of the divine unities begin from being, but end, in a corporeal nature.**

For being is the first of participants, but body the last: for we say that there are divine bodies. For the highest of all the genera of bodies, souls, and intellects are attributed to the Gods, so that in every order things analogous to the Gods may connect and preserve secondary natures, and that each number may be a whole containing all things in itself, according to the whole which is in a part, and possessing prior to other things the divine peculiarity. The divine genus, therefore, subsists corporeally, psychically, and intellectually: and it is evident that all these are divine according to participation. For that which is primarily divine subsists in the unities. Hence the participants of the divine unities originate indeed from being, but end in a corporeal nature.

### **PROPOSITION CXL.**

**All the powers of divine natures, having a supernal origin, and proceeding through appropriate media, extend even to the last of things and to the terrestrial regions.<sup>61</sup>**

For neither does any thing intercept these powers, [105] and exclude their presence from all things. For they are not in want of places and intervals, on account of their unrestrained transcendence with respect to all things, and a presence every where unmingled. Nor is that which is adapted to participate of them, prohibited from participation. But as soon as any nature is prepared for participation they also are present, neither then approaching nor prior to this absent, but always possessing an invariable sameness of subsistence. If, therefore, any terrene nature is adapted to the participation of these divine powers they are present with it, and fill all things with themselves: and with superior natures they are in a greater degree present, but they are present with the mediate natures according to their order, and with the natures which are last in an ultimate degree. From on high, therefore, they extend themselves even to the last of things. Hence in last natures there are representations of those which are first, and *all things sympathize with all*;<sup>62</sup> secondary indeed pre-existing [106] in primary natures, but primary natures presenting themselves to the view in those which are secondary. For every thing subsists in a three-fold manner, either through cause, through hyparxis, or by participation.

61. See Plotinus: En. IV. 3. 1 sq., En. IV. 4. 22 sq. En. VI. 7, 11 sq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* II. 1. II. 11.

62. Thus too Hippocrates, *ἕν ποταμός, ἕν πνεῦμα, πάντα συμπάθεια*, i.e. "there is one conflux, one conspiracy, and all things sympathize with all." He who

understands this will see that the magic cultivated by the ancient philosophers is founded in a theory no less sublime than rational and true. Such a one will survey the universe as one great animal, all whose parts are in union and consent with each other, so that nothing is foreign and detached; nothing, strictly speaking, void of sympathy and life. For though various parts of the world, when considered as separated from the whole, are destitute of peculiar life yet they possess some degree of animation, however inconsiderable, when viewed with relation to the universe. Life indeed may be compared to a perpetual and universal sound; and the soul of the world resembles a lyre, or some other musical instrument, from which we may suppose this sound to be emitted. But from the unbounded diffusion as it were of the mundane soul every thing participates of this harmonical sound, in a greater or less perfection, according to the dignity of its nature. So that while life every where resounds, the most abject of beings may be said to retain a faint echo of melody produced by the mundane lyre. It was doubtless from profoundly considering this sympathy between the mundane soul and the parts of the world that the ancient philosophers were enabled to procure the presence of divinity, and performs effects beyond the comprehension of the vulgar. And that this was the opinion of Plotinus, the following passage evinces: "It appears to me that the ancient wise men, who wished to procure the presence of the Gods by fabricating statues and performing sacred rites, directed their intellectual eye to the nature of the universe, and perceived that the nature of the soul was every where easy to be attracted, when a proper subject was at hand, easily passive to its influence. But every thing adapted to imitation is readily passive, and is like a mirror able to seize a certain form, and reflect it to the view." Ennead 4. lib. 3. ♦T.

### **PROPOSITION CXLI.**

**Every providence of the Gods is twofold, one exempt from the natures for which it provides, but the other co-ordinated with them.**

For some divine essences, through their hyparxis and the peculiarity of their order, are entirely expanded above the illuminated natures. But others, which are of the same order, provide for things subordinate of the same co-ordination; these likewise imitating the providential activity of the exempt Gods, and desiring to fill secondary natures with the good which they are able to impart.<sup>63</sup>

63. See Plotinus: En. IV. 8. 2. and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 15. [107]

### **PROPOSITION CXLII.**

**The Gods are present to all things in the same manner, but all things are not in the same manner present to the Gods. But every thing participates of their presence according to its own order and power. And this is accomplished by some things uniformly, but by others manifoldly; by some eternally, but by others according to time; and by some incorporeally, but by others corporeally.**

For it is necessary that the different participation of the same things should become different either from the participant, or from that which is participated. But every divine nature always has the same order, and is free from any relation to all things, and is unmixed. It follows therefore that the mutation must arise and subsist from the



participants, and that in these there is that which is not invariably the same, and that at different times they are differently present to the Gods. Hence though the Gods are present to all things with invariable sameness, all things are not in the same manner present to them. But other things are present to them to the extent of their capacity, and according to the manner in which they are present they enjoy their illuminations. For the participation of the Gods is according to the measure of their presence.

### **PROPOSITION CXLIII.**

**All inferior natures yield to the presence of the Gods, though the participant may be adapted to participation. Every thing alien recedes from the divine light, but all things are illuminated at once by the Gods.**

For divine natures are always more comprehensive and more powerful than the things which proceed from them. But the inaptitude of the participants is the cause of the deprivation of divine illumination: for this inaptitude obscures it by its own imbecility. And [108] this being obscured, a certain other appears to receive dominion, not according to its own power, but according to the imbecility of the participant, which seems to rise against the divine form of the illumination.

### **PROPOSITION CXLIV.**

**All beings, and all the distributions of beings, extend as far in their progressions as the orders of the Gods.**

For the Gods produce beings with themselves, nor is it possible for any thing to subsist, and to receive measure and order external to the Gods; for all things are perfected, disposed, and measured by the power of the Gods. Prior therefore to the last genera in beings the Gods preexist, who likewise adorn these genera, and impart to them life, form and perfection, and convert them to The Good. In a similar manner, likewise, the Gods are prior to the middle and first genera of beings: and all things are bound and rooted in the Gods, and through this cause are preserved. But when any thing apostatizes from and becomes destitute of the Gods, it entirely departs into non-entity and vanishes, because it is wholly deprived of those natures by which it was contained.

### **PROPOSITION CXLV.**

**The peculiarity of every divine order pervades through all secondary natures, and imparts itself to all the subordinate genera of beings.**

For if beings proceed as far as the orders of the Gods extend, in every genus of beings there is a supernally-illuminated peculiarity of the divine powers. For every thing receives from its proximate appropriate cause the peculiarity according to which that cause is allotted its hypostasis. I say, for instance, if there is a certain purifying deity, there is likewise a purification in souls, in animals, in plants, and in stones. And, in a [109] similar manner, if there is a guardian, a convertive, a perfective, and a vivific power. And a stone indeed participates of the divine purifying power corporeally only; but a plant participates it more clearly, through life. An animal has this form according to impulse or desire: the rational soul, rationally; intellect, intellectually;

and the Gods superessentially and unically. The whole causal chain likewise has the same power from one divine cause. And there is the same mode of reasoning with respect to the peculiarities of the other divine powers. For all things depend on the Gods. And different natures are illuminated by different Gods; every divine causal chain extending even to the last of things. And some things indeed depend on the Gods immediately, but others through a greater or less number of media. *Truly, all things are full of Gods*: and whatever each thing naturally has, it receives from the Gods.<sup>64</sup>

## PROPOSITION CXLVI.

**The ends of all the divine progressions are assimilated to their principles, preserving a circle without a beginning and without an end, through the return of all to their principles.**<sup>65</sup>

[110]

For if every thing which has proceeded returns to its own principle from which it proceeded, much more will universal orders having proceeded from their summit again return to it. But the return of the end to the beginning renders the whole order one, definite, and tending to itself, and exhibiting through this tendency or inclination to itself the uniform which is in the multitude.

64. As to the argument, see Plotinus: En. III. 8. 1 sqq.; Iamblichus *De Myster.* I. 8. and notes of Gale, p. 191; Porphyrii Sententt. XXVIII-XXX; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* IV. 8. IV. 16; and Damascius *περι της αφομοιωτικης διακοσμησεως*, in his work *Περί Αρξών*, p. 199 sq., Vol. II. ed. Ruelle.

65. Plotinus, (En. I. 7. 1.), says: "For it is necessary to posit The Good, on which all things depend, but it depends on nothing. Thus the absolute principle is The Good itself, which all things desire. It is requisite, therefore, that it abide immutably, converting all things to itself, just as the circle revolves about the centre, from which all the lines flow and to which they tend. An example to us is the Sun, which is as it were a centre to light, which emanates from it and at the same time is attached to it. Indeed light everywhere co-exists with the Sun, and is nowhere separated from it: even if you should wish to sunder it into parts, nevertheless light will remain concentrated in the Sun." See, further, En. II. 2. 1., En. VI. 9. 8.

## PROPOSITION CXLVII.

**The summits of all the divine orders are assimilated to the ends of the natures which are proximately above them.**

For if it is necessary that there should be a continuity of the divine progression, and that each order should be bound together by appropriate media, it is necessary that the summits of secondary should be conjoined with the ends of primary orders. But this contact becomes through similitude. Hence there will be a similitude of the principles of an inferior to the ends of a proximately superior order.

## PROPOSITION CXLVIII.

**Every divine order is united to itself in a threefold manner, viz. by the summit which is in it, by its middle, and by its end.**

For the summit having a power which is most unical transmits union to all the causal chain, and unites the whole of it, supernally abiding in itself. But the middle, extending to both extremes, 'binds together the whole order about itself; transmitting indeed the gifts of primary divine natures, but extending the powers of those which are last and inserting communion in all of [111] them, and a conjunction with each other. For thus the whole order becomes one from natures which replenish and those that are filled, converging to the middle as to a certain center. And the end again returning to the beginning, and recalling the proceeding powers, imparts similitude and convergency to the whole order. And thus the whole order is one through the unific power of primary natures, through the connexion existing in the middle, and through the return of the end to the principle of the progressions.

### **PROPOSITION CXLIX.**

**Every multitude of the divine unities is bounded by number.**

For if it is most proximate to The One it will not be infinite: for the infinite is not connascent with The One, but alien to it. Indeed, if multitude of itself or essentially departs from The One, it is evident that infinite multitude is perfectly destitute of it. Hence it is powerless, and inefficacious. The multitude of the Gods therefore is not infinite. Hence it is uniform and finite, and is more finite than every other multitude: for it is nearer to The One than all other multitude. If therefore the principle of things was multitude, it would be necessary that every thing which is nearer to the principle should be a greater multitude than that which is more remote from it: for that which is nearer to any thing is more similar to it. Since, however, that which is first is The One, the multitude which is conjoined with it is a less multitude than that which is more remote from it. But the infinite is not a less, but the greatest possible multitude.

[112]

### **PROPOSITION CL.**

**Every nature which proceeds in the divine orders is not naturally adapted to receive all the powers of its producing cause. Nor in brief are secondary natures able to receive all the powers of the natures prior to themselves, but these have certain powers exempt from things in an inferior order, and incomprehensible by the beings posterior to themselves.<sup>66</sup>**

For if the peculiarities or characteristics of the Gods differ from each other, those of the subordinate preexist in the superior divinities; but those of the superior, since they are more universal, are not in the subordinate. But more excellent natures impart indeed some powers to their progeny, but antecedently assume others in themselves, in an exempt manner. For it has been demonstrated that those Gods who are nearer to The One are more universal; and those more remote from it more partial. But if the more universal have powers comprehensive of the more partial, those that have a secondary and more partial order will not comprehend the power of the more universal Gods. In the superior therefore there is something incomprehensible and

uncircumscribed by the inferior orders: for each of the divine orders is truly infinite. Nor is that which is infinite, as has been demonstrated, infinite to itself, nor much less to things above itself, but to all the natures posterior to itself: but infinity in these last is in capacity, or power. The infinite, however, is incomprehensible by those natures to which it is infinite. Subordinate natures, therefore, do not participate of all the powers which more excellent natures antecedently comprehend in themselves: for the latter are incomprehensible by [113] the former. Hence things of a secondary nature, through their more partial subsistence, will neither possess all the powers of more excellent beings, nor will they possess the powers which they do contain in the same manner as superior natures, on account of that infinity through which the latter transcend the former.

66. See the Phaedrus, p. 246 sq., and Commentary of Hermeias, p. 134 sq., ed Couvreur; Plotinus: En, V. 8. 3.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* II. 11. IV. 3.

### **PROPOSITION CLI.**

**Every paternal order or genus in the Gods is primary, and pre-exists in the rank of The Good, according to all the divine orders.**

For the paternal genus produces the hyparxes of secondary natures, and total powers and essences, through one ineffable transcendancy. Hence likewise it is denominated paternal, by reason of exhibiting the united and boniform power of The One, and the cause which constitutes secondary natures. And in each order of the Gods the paternal genus ranks as the leader, producing all things from itself, and adorning them, because it is arranged analogous to The Good. And of the divine fathers some are more universal, but others are more partial, just as the orders themselves of the Gods differ according to a more universal or particular nature, through a causal reason. As many therefore as are the universal progressions of the Gods, so many likewise are the differences of the fathers. For if there is that which is analogous to The Good in every order, it is necessary that there should be a paternal genus in all the orders, and that each order should proceed from the paternal union.<sup>67</sup>

67. On the paternal order of the Gods, and the paternal Gods, consult Iamblichus *On the Mysteries*, VIII. 2. 3. and the Notes of Gale, p. 297; and Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* V. 3. VI. 6. [114]

### **PROPOSITION CLII.**

**Every thing which is generative in the Gods proceeds according to the infinity of divine power, multiplying itself, proceeding through all things, and transcendentally exhibiting a never-failing power in the progressions of secondary natures.**

For to multiply things which proceed, and to produce things into progeny from the occult comprehension in causes, of what else is it the prerogative than of the infinite power of the Gods, through which all divine natures are filled with prolific good? For every thing which is full produces other things from itself through a super-plenary power. The domination of power therefore is the peculiarity of generative deity, which multiplies the powers of the things generated, renders them prolific, and excites

them to generate and constitute other things. For if every nature imparts the appropriate peculiarity which it has primarily to other things, every nature which is prolific will impart to natures posterior to itself a prolific progression, and will adumbrate the infinity which is the primary leader of wholes, from which every generative power proceeds, and which in an exempt manner pours forth the perennial progressions of divine natures.

### **PROPOSITION CLIII.**

**Every thing perfect in the Gods is the cause of divine perfection.**

For as the hypostases of beings are of one kind, but those of superessential natures of another, so likewise of perfections — those of the Gods themselves are in their hyparxis, but those of beings are secondary and posterior to them. And the former are self-perfect and primary, because The Good subsists primarily in them; but the latter possess perfection through participation. [115] Hence the perfection of the Gods is one thing, and that of deified natures is another. The perfection however which is primarily in the Gods is not only the cause of perfection to deified natures, but likewise to the Gods themselves. For if every nature so far as it is perfect returns to its own principle, that which is the cause of all divine return is the perfective genus of the Gods.

### **PROPOSITION CLIV.**

**Every thing which is of a guardian nature in the Gods preserves every thing in its proper order, and is uniformly exempt from secondary and established, in primary natures.**

For if a guard immutably preserves the measure of the order of every thing, and connectedly contains all the natures which are guarded in their appropriate perfection, it will impart to all things an excellence superior to subordinate beings, and will firmly establish each thing unmingled in itself, existing as the cause of undefiled purity to the natures which are guarded, and fixing them in superior beings. For every thing is perfect which adheres to primary natures, is in itself alone, and is expanded above all things subordinate.

### **PROPOSITION CLV.**

**Every thing vivific in the Gods is a generative cause, but every generative cause is not vivific.**

For a generative is more universal than a vivific cause, and is nearer to the principle of all things. For generation manifests a cause which produces beings into multitude: but vivification represents to us the deity who is the supplier of all life. If therefore the former multiplies the hypostases of beings, but the latter the progressions of life, — if this be the case, as being is to life so is the generative order to the vivific causal chain. Hence the former will be more universal and the cause [116] of a greater number of effects, and therefore will be nearer to the principle of all things.

## PROPOSITION CLVI.

**Every cause of purity is contained in the guardian order: but on the contrary every genus of a guardian order is not the same with the purifying genus.**

For purity imparts to all the Gods the unmingled with things inferior, and the undefiled in the providence of secondary natures. But a guardian power likewise effects this, contains all things in itself, and firmly inserts them in superior natures. The guardian therefore is more universal than the purifying genus. For, in brief, the peculiarity of the guardian power is to preserve the order of every thing the same with reference to itself, and to the natures prior and posterior to itself: but the peculiarity of purity is to keep more excellent natures exempt from those which are subordinate. These powers however are primarily in the Gods. For it is necessary that there should be one cause preceding that which is in all things, and, in brief, that there should be uniform measures of all good causally comprehended by the Gods. For there is no good in secondary natures which does not pre-exist in the Gods: for what other origin or cause can this have? Hence in the divinities purity is likewise a primary good, guardianship, and every thing of this kind.

## PROPOSITION CLVII.

**Every paternal cause is the supplier of being to all things, and constitutes the hyparxes of beings. But every nature which is fabricative of the production of form exists prior to composite natures, and precedes their order and division according to number, and is likewise of the same coordination with the paternal cause in the more partial genera of things.**

For each of these is of the order of bound; since [117] hyparxis, number and form have all of them the form of bound: so that in this respect they are co-ordinate with each other. But the demiurgic cause produces fabrication into multitude; and the uniform supplies the progressions of beings. And the one is the artificer of form, but the other produces essence. So far therefore as form and being differ from each other, so far likewise does the paternal differ from the demiurgic cause. But form is causal.<sup>68</sup> Hence the paternal cause is more universal and causal, and is beyond the demiurgic genus, in the same manner as being is beyond form.

68. See Proclus in *Platonis Tim.* p. 269 sq. Vol. III. ed. Diehl.

## PROPOSITION CLVIII.

**Every elevating cause in the Gods differs both from a purifying cause and from the revertive genera.**

For it is evident that this cause has necessarily a primary subsistence in the Gods; since in these all the causes of total good pre-exist. But it subsists prior to the purifying cause: for the one liberates from things of a subordinate nature, but the other conjoins with more excellent natures. The elevating however has a more partial order than the revertive cause, because every nature which returns, returns either to itself, or to that which is more excellent than itself. But the work of the elevating cause is

characterized by a return to that which is more excellent, because it leads that which returns to a superior and more divine cause.<sup>69</sup>

69. See Iamblichus *De Mysteriis*, VIII. 8.; Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XXXIV.; Proclus in *Plat. Tim.* p. 165 Vol. III. ed. Diehl; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* IV. 9. IV 19. V. 18. [118]

### **PROPOSITION CLIX.**

**Every order of the Gods consists of the first principles, Bound, and Infinity. But one order is caused more by Bound, and another by Infinity.**

For every order proceeds from each of these principles, because the importances of first causes extend through all secondary natures. But in some things bound predominates in the mixture [of bound and infinity,] and in others infinity. And thus the genus which has the form of bound is perfected in which the powers of bound dominate: and so too the genus which has the form of the infinite is perfected in which the powers of infinity dominate.<sup>70</sup>

70. Consult Plotinus: En. III. 8. 8. sq., En. VI. 6. 18.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* II. 4.; Damascius Περὶ Ἀρχῶν.

## **On Intellect.**

### **PROPOSITION CLX.**

**Every divine intellect is uniform, and perfect. And the first intellect is from itself, and produces other intellects.**

For if it is a God it is filled with divine unities, and is uniform. But if this be so, it is likewise perfect, because it is full of divine goodness. And if this be admitted, it is likewise primarily intellect, since it is united to the Gods: for deified intellect is better than every intellect. But since it is primarily intellect, it likewise imparts an hypostasis to other intellects. For all secondary natures receive their hyparxis from the primary natures.<sup>71</sup>

71. For further information about Intellect, see Plotinus: En. I. 3. 5., En. V. 1. 8., En. V. 9., En. VI. 2. 4., En. VI. 7. 35.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* p. 53; Aristot. *De Anima* I. 5. [119]

### **PROPOSITION CLXI.**

**Every thing which is truly being, and because it depends on the Gods, is divine and imparticipable.**

For since that which is truly being is the first of the natures which participate of the divine union, as has been demonstrated, it likewise fills intellect from itself. For intellect is being, because it is filled with being, and true being is therefore a divine intelligible: as that which is deified it is divine, but as that which fills intellect, and is

participated by it, it is intelligible. Intellect likewise is being through that which is primarily being. But that which is primarily being itself is separate from intellect, because intellect is posterior to being. But imparticipables subsist prior to things which are participated: hence being which subsists by itself and is imparticipable is prior to the being which is conjoined with intellect. For it is intelligible, not as co-arranged with intellect, but as perfecting intellect in an exempt manner, because it imparts being to it, and fills it with truly existing essence.

## **PROPOSITION CLXII.**

**Every multitude of unities which illuminates truly existing being is arcane and intelligible; arcane since it is conjoined with The One, but intelligible because it is participated by being.**

For all the Gods are denominated from the things which depend on them; because from these it is possible to know their different hypostases, which are [of themselves] unknown. For every thing divine is of itself ineffable and unknown, because it is connascent with the Ineffable One.<sup>72</sup> From the difference, however, [120] of the participants it happens that the peculiarities of divine natures become known. The Gods, therefore, which illuminate truly existing being are intelligible; because true being is a divine intelligible, and imparticipable, subsisting prior to intellect. For this would not depend on the first Gods, unless they likewise possessed a primary hypostasis, and a power perfective of other Gods, — since, as participants are to each other, so likewise are the hyparxes of the things which are participated.

72. Compare Iamblichus, (*On the Mysteries*, VIII. 2.): "Prior to truly existing beings and universal principles there is one God prior even to [that deity who is generally believed to be] the first God and king, abiding immovable in the solitude of his own unity. For neither is the intelligible, nor any other nature, connected with him .... he is worshipped by silence alone." And Damascius *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν* (p. 324 Vol. I.): "The Egyptians in certain discourses celebrate the One Principle of all as an Unknown Darkness, and this thrice pronounced as such."

## **PROPOSITION CLXIII.**

**Every multitude of unities which is participated by imparticipable intellect is intellectual.**

For as intellect is to truly existing being, so are these unities to the intelligible unities. If, therefore, the latter which illuminate being are intelligible, hence the former which illuminate a divine and imparticipable intellect are intellectual. Yet they are not intellectual in such a way as if they subsisted in intellect, but as causally existing prior to intellect, and generating intellect.

## **PROPOSITION CLXIV.**

**Every multitude of unities which is participated by every imparticipable soul is supermundane.**



For because imparticipable soul is primarily above the world, the Gods also which are participated by it are likewise supermundane, having the same analogy or proportion to the intellectual and intelligible Gods which soul has to intellect, and intellect to truly existing being. As, therefore, every soul depends on intellect, and intellect returns to the intelligible, thus likewise the supermundane are dependent on the intellectual, [121] in the same manner as the intellectual on the intelligible Gods.<sup>73</sup>

73. On the Gods, supermundane, intellectual, intelligible, etc., see Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* pp. 8. 38. 59. 97.107. 191-194. 270. 328., and Damascius Περὶ Ἀρχῶν.

## **PROPOSITION CLXV.**

**Every multitude of unities which is participated by a certain sensible body is mundane.**

For it illuminates the parts of the world through the medium or intervening of intellect and soul.<sup>74</sup> For neither is intellect present to any mundane body without soul, nor are deity and soul conjoined immediately, because participations and conjunctions become through similars. Intellect itself likewise according to its intelligible and summit participates of unity. Unities, therefore, are mundane, because they give completion to the whole world, and deify visible bodies. For each of these is divine, not through soul, for soul is not primarily a God, — nor through intellect, since intellect is not the same with The One. But each of these visible bodies is animated, indeed, and moved of itself, through soul: and it possesses a perpetual sameness of subsistence, and is moved in the most excellent order through intellect: but it is divine through union. And if it possesses a providential power, it possesses it through this cause.

74. Compare Aristotle *De Anima* III. 4.; Plotinus: *En.* IV. 3. 3 sq.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* pp. 17. 36. 42. 128. 141. 259. 469.

## **PROPOSITION CLXVI.**

**Every intellect is either imparticipable or participable. And if participable, it is either participated by supermundane or by mundane souls.**

For imparticipable intellect, having a primary hyparxis, [122] is the leader of every multitude of intellects. But of participable intellects some illuminate the supermundane and imparticipable soul, but others the mundane soul. For the mundane multitude does not immediately emanate from the imparticipable, if progressions become through similars. But that which is separate from the world is more similar to the imparticipable than that which is divided about it. Nor does a supermundane multitude alone exist, but there are likewise mundane multitudes; since there is a mundane multitude of Gods, and the world itself is animated and at the same time intellectual. The participation likewise of the supermundane Gods by mundane souls, is through the medium of mundane intellects.

## **PROPOSITION CLXVII.**

**Every intellect thinks itself: but the Primal Intellect thinks itself only, and in this intellect Thought and the object of thought (the intelligible) are one numerically. But each of the subsequent intellects thinks itself and the natures prior to itself. And the intelligible to each of these is partly that which it is (itself) and partly that from which it emanates.**

For every intellect either thinks itself, or that which is above itself, or that which is posterior to itself. But if it thinks that which is posterior to itself, since it is intellect, it will turn to that which is less excellent than itself; and thus will not know that to which it turns, because the object of its thought is not in itself, but external to itself: and it will only know the image of this thing, which was generated in itself from it. For that which it has it knows, and that which it experiences, but not that which it does not possess, and by which it is not affected.

But if it thinks that which is above itself, if indeed this is done through the knowledge of itself, it will at [123] one and the same time both know itself and that superior nature. But if it knows that alone it will be ignorant of itself, even though it is intellect. In brief, by knowing that which is prior to itself, it will know that it is a cause, and will likewise know the things of which it is the cause. For if it is ignorant of these, it will likewise be ignorant of that which is the cause of them, not knowing that which produces what it produces by its very being, and what the things are which it does produce. Hence by knowing the things of which the nature which is superior to it is the cause, it will likewise know itself, because it emanates from thence. By knowing, therefore, that which is prior to itself, it will likewise entirely know itself. Hence if there is a certain intelligible intellect, this knowing itself will likewise know the intelligible, since it is itself the intelligible. But each of the intellects which are subsequent to the First will think the intelligible which is in itself, and at the same time that which is prior to itself. Hence the intelligible is in intellect, and intellect is in the intelligible. But one intellect is the same with the intelligible; and another is the same with the thought which is in itself, but is not the same with the intelligible prior to itself.<sup>75</sup> For one is that which is simply intelligible, and another is the intelligible in that which thinks.

75. Thus, for instance, Intellect in being itself, which comprehends the highest order of intelligibles, is νοῦς νοητός or an intelligible intellect, because it is the object of intelligence to all subordinate natures, and because its vision is transcendently simple and occult. But every intellect is indeed the same with the intelligible in its own nature, but is subordinate to the Intelligible itself. -T.

## **PROPOSITION CLXVIII.**

**Every intellect in activity knows that it thinks, and it is not the peculiarity of one intellect to think, and of another to know that it thinks.**

[124]

For if it is intellect in activity, and thinks itself to be no other than the object of thought, it will know itself, and see itself.<sup>76</sup> But seeing that which thinks, and knowing that which sees, it will know that it is intellect in activity. But knowing this, it will know that it thinks, and will not alone know the objects of its thinking. Hence it will

simultaneously know the intelligible and that it thinks it, and by thinking itself it will know itself.

76. Intellect in energy, or in the act of understanding, is the same with the object of its intellection. For the object of its perception must be resident in its essence, or it would perceive externally like sense; and thus would not behold the thing itself, but only its image. But if that which is intelligible is seated in the essence of intellect, it will in no respect differ from intellect: for it will be essential to its nature, and will consequently be intellectual as well as intelligible. ♦T.

But the intellect itself is likewise intelligible, in the same manner as other intelligible natures are; and in those beings which are wholly separated from matter that which thinks and that which is thought are the same. ♦Aristotle: *De Anima* III. 4.

### **PROPOSITION CLXIX.**

**Every intellect has its essence, power and action in eternity.**

For if intellect thinks itself, and intellect and the intelligible are the same, thought likewise is the same as intellect and the intelligible. For, since thinking is the medium between that which thinks and the object of thought, and these are the same, thinking likewise will be the same with each. But that the essence of intellect is eternal is evident — for the whole of it subsists at once — and thinking is likewise eternal, since it is the same with the essence of intellect. For if intellect is immovable, it will not be measured by time, neither according to its being nor its activity: but since these subsist with invariable sameness, the power likewise of intellect will be eternal. [125]

### **PROPOSITION CLXX.**

**Every intellect thinks all things together. But imparticipable intellect thinks all things together simply: and each of the intellects subsequent to it thinks all things according to one or under the form, of the singular.**

For if every intellect establishes its essence in eternity, and together with its essence its activity, it will think all things together: but to every nature which is not established in eternity the successive objects of its perception subsist according to parts or severally. For every thing which is successive is in time; the successive consisting of prior and posterior, but the whole of it not existing together. If therefore all intellects similarly think (know) all things, they will not differ from each other. For if they think all things similarly they are similarly all things, since they are the very things which they think. But if all intellects are similarly all things, one intellect will not be imparticipable and another not. For their essences are the same things as the objects of their thought; since the thinking of each intellect is the same with the being of each, and each is both thought and essence. It follows, therefore, either that each intellect does not similarly think all things, but one thing, or more than one, but not all things together; or that it thinks (knows) all things according to one (under the form of the singular).<sup>77</sup> To assert however that each intellect does not know all things, is to make intellect to be ignorant of some particular being. For if it is transitive in its activity, and thinks (knows) all things not together but according to prior and

posterior, (*i.e.* knows one thing first and another subsequently), [126] at the same time having an immovable nature, it will be inferior to soul, which knows all things in and by activity; because intellect on this hypothesis will only know one thing on account of its immovability. It will therefore know all things according to one. For it either knows all things together, or one thing only, or all things according to one: for in all intellects there is always the thought or knowledge of all things, which bounds all things in one of all. Hence there is something dominant in thought, and the objects of thought; since all things are apprehended together as one only through the domination of one, which characterizes all things by itself.

77. By an intellectual perception of all things according to the one, Proclus means a perception of all things in one. For all intellectual forms are in each; so that a perception of one is a perception of all forms, and therefore of all things. -T.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXI.**

**Every intellect is an imparticipable essence.**

For if it is without magnitude, incorporeal and immovable, it is impartible. For every thing which in any way whatsoever is partible, is either partible by reason of magnitude, or multitude, or of activities which function in time. But intellect is eternal in all things, and is beyond bodies, and the multitude which is in it is united. It is, therefore, impartible. That intellect likewise is incorporeal, the return to itself evidences: for no body returns to itself. But that it is eternal, the identity of its activity with its essence shows. For this has been before demonstrated. And that the multitude in it is united is evident from the continuity of intellectual multitude with the divine unities: for these are the first multitude, but intellects are next to these. Hence though every intellect is a multitude, yet it is an united multitude. For prior to that which is divided that which is collected into profound union, and is nearer to The One, subsists. [127]

### **PROPOSITION CLXXII.**

**Every intellect is proximately the producing cause of natures perpetual and immutable in essence.**

For every nature which is produced by an immovable cause, is immutable in essence. But immovable intellect being all things eternally, and abiding in eternity, produces by its very being that which it produces. If therefore intellect always is, and is invariably the same, it always produces, and in the same manner. Hence it is not the cause of things which at one time exist and at another time not, but it is the cause of things which always exist.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXIII.**

**Every intellect is intellectual, and the things which are prior and posterior to itself are likewise intellectual.**

For the things which are posterior to itself are intellectual through cause, but the things which are prior to itself through participation: but intellect is the same, and is

allotted an intellectual essence. Hence it defines all things according to its essence; both the things which are through cause, and those which are through participation. For every thing participates of more excellent beings in the way that it is naturally adapted to participate, and not according to the subsistence of the more excellent: for otherwise they would be similarly participated by all things. Participations therefore are according to the peculiarity and power of the participants. Hence in intellect the natures prior to it subsist intellectually; but intellect is likewise intellectually the things posterior to itself. For it does not consist of its effects, nor does it contain these but the causes of these in itself. But intellect is by its very being the cause of all things: and the very being of it is intellectual. Hence it contains intellectually the causes of all things, and [128] therefore every intellect contains all things intellectually, both those which are prior and those which are posterior to it. As therefore every intellect contains intelligibles intellectually, so likewise it contains sensibles intellectually.

#### **PROPOSITION CLXXIV.**

**Every intellect constitutes the things posterior to itself by thinking, and its creation is in thinking, and its thought in creating.**

For if intelligible and intellect are the same, the essence likewise of every intellect will be the same with the thinking in itself. But intellect does that which it does through its essence, and produces according to the very being which it is, and by thought therefore it will produce the things which are produced. For in intellect being and thought are one. For intellect is the same with every being which it contains. If therefore it makes by its very being, but its very being is thought, it makes by thinking. The activity of thought consists in thinking, and this is the same with the essence of intellect, and the function of the essence of intellect is to produce. For that which produces immovably, always has its very being in producing; the thought of intellect therefore consists in producing.

#### **PROPOSITION CLXXV.**

**Every intellect is primarily participated by those natures which are intellectual both in essence and in activity.**

For it is necessary that every intellect should either be participated by those, or by other natures which have indeed an intellectual essence but do not always think. It is however impossible that it should be participated by the latter. For the activity of intellect is immovable. And hence the natures by which it is [129] participated always participate of intellectual activity, which always causes the participants of it to become intellectual. For that which possesses its activity in a certain part of time is unadapted to be conjoined with an eternal activity. But as in essences so in the mutations and varieties of activities, between every eternal activity and that activity which is perfected in a certain time is that activity which has its perfection in the whole of time. For progressions never become without a medium, but through cognate and similar natures, according to the hypostases and perfections of energies. In a similar manner, therefore, every intellect is primarily participated by those beings which are able to think during the whole of time, and who always think, though their thinking is in time, and is not eternally in activity.

*Corollary.*— From this therefore it is evident that it is impossible for the soul which at one time thinks and at another does not to participate proximately of intellect.

## **PROPOSITION CLXXVI.**

**All intellectual forms are in each other, and, each is at the same time *per se* and distinct from the others.**

For if every intellect is impartible, and the multitude which is in it is united through intellectual impartibility, all things in it will be in one, impartibles will be united to each other, and all intellectual forms will pervade through all. But if all intellectual forms are immaterial and incorporeal they are unconfused with each other and separate, and each preserving its own purity remains that which it is. The peculiar participation however of each participating in a separate manner manifests the unconfused nature of intellectual forms. For unless the forms which are participated were different and apart from each other, the participants [130] of each of them would not participate in a separate manner, but in the subordinate natures [*i.e.* in the participants] there would be a much greater indistinct confusion, because in rank they are inferior. For whence would there be a separation of these, if the natures which constitute and perfect them were confused and indistinguishable? But, further, the impartible hypostasis and uniform essence of that which contains forms evince their united nature: for things which have their hyparxis in the impartible and the uniform are impartibly in the same thing. For how can you divide the impartible and The One? Hence they are simultaneously existent, and are in each other, each wholly pervading through the whole of each, without interval. For that which comprehends them is not extended with interval, nor is one of them in this thing, but another elsewhere, as in that which has interval, but every thing is together in the impartible and in one: so that all intellectual forms are in each other, and are in each other unitedly, and at the same time each is distinctly apart from each.

*Corollary.*— But if any one, in addition to these demonstrations, needs examples, he may consider the theorems which exist in one soul. For all these are in the same soul, an essence which is truly without magnitude, and are united to each other. For that which is without magnitude does not locally contain the things which are in it, but impartibly and without interval, and the natures which it contains are united and separated. For the soul of itself draws forth all the propositions, each apart from each, drawing nothing to itself from the rest which, unless they were always separated in habit, would not be separated by the action of the soul. [131]

## **PROPOSITION CLXXVII.**

**Every intellect being a plenitude of forms, one intellect contains more universal but another more partial forms. And the superior intellects contain more universally the things which those posterior to them contain more partially. But the inferior intellects contain more partially the things which those that are prior to them contain more universally.**

For the superior intellects use greater powers, because they are more unical than secondary intellects. But the inferior intellects, since they are more multiplied, diminish the powers which they contain. For things which are more cognate to The

One, because they are contracted in quantity are superior in power to the natures which are posterior to them. And, on the contrary, things more remote from The One because they are increased in quantity are inferior to the natures which are nearer to The One. Hence the superior intellects, since they are essentially greater in power but less in multitude, through forms which are quantitatively less produce more effects; but the intellects posterior to them produce fewer effects through forms which are quantitatively more by reason of a deficiency in power. If therefore the former produce more effects through fewer forms, the forms in them are more universal: and if the latter produce fewer effects through a greater number of forms, the forms in them are more partial.

*Corollary.*— Hence it happens that the natures which are generated from superior intellects through one form are produced divisibly from secondary intellects through many forms. And, again, those natures which are produced by inferior intellects through many and distinct forms, are produced by superior intellects through [132] fewer but more universal forms. And that which is universal and common to all its participants accedes supernally: but that which is divided and peculiar accedes from secondary intellects. Hence secondary intellects by the more partial separation of forms distinctly unfold in a certain way and subtly differentiate the productions of primary intellects.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXVIII.**

**Every intellectual form constitutes eternal natures.**

For if every intellectual form is eternal and immovable, it is essentially the cause of immutable and eternal hypostases, but not of those which become and are corruptible: so that every thing which subsists by reason of an intellectual form is an eternal intellectual nature. For if all forms produce things posterior to themselves by their very being, but their being has an invariable sameness of subsistence, the things produced by them will likewise be invariably the same, and will be eternal. Neither therefore do the genera which are only in time subsist from a formal cause, nor have corruptible natures as such a pre-existent intellectual form. For they would be incorruptible and unbegotten, if they derived their hypostasis from intellectual forms.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXIX.**

**Every intellectual number is finite.**

For if there is another multitude posterior to this, essentially inferior to it, and thus more remote from The One, but the intellectual number is nearer to The One, and if that which is nearer to The One, is quantitatively less, but that which is more remote from it is quantitatively more, — if this be the case, the intellectual number likewise will be less than every multitude posterior to it. Hence it is not infinite. The multitude [133] of intellects therefore is finite. For that which is less than a certain thing is not infinite, because the infinite so far as it is infinite is not less than any thing.<sup>78</sup>

78. See Plotinus: En. VI. 6. 8 sq.; Proclus in Plat, theol. IV, 29.; Hermiae Scholia in Plat. Phaedrum, p. 167 sq., ed. Couvreur.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXX.**

**Every intellect is a whole, because each consists of parts, and is at once united to other intellects and differentiated from them. But imparticipable intellect is a whole simply, since it has in itself all the parts totally or under the form of the whole; but each partial intellect contains the whole as in apart, and thus is all things partially.**

For if a partial intellect is all things according to one, and a subsistence according to one is nothing else than a subsistence partially, the whole is in each of these intellects partially, being defined according to a certain one particular thing which dominates in all of them.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXI.**

**Every participated, intellect is either divine because it depends on the Gods, or is intellectual only.**

For if there is a divine and imparticipable intellect primarily, the intellect which is cognate to this is not that which differs from it in both respects, viz. which is neither divine nor imparticipable, For things which are dissimilar in both these respects cannot be conjoined to each other. It is evident therefore that the medium between these is partly similar to that which is primarily intellect, and partly dissimilar to it. Either, therefore, it is imparticipable and not divine; or it is participated and divine. But every nature imparticipable is divine, because it is allotted an order in multitude analogous to The One. Hence there will be a certain [134] Intellect which is divine and at the same time participated. It is necessary however that there should be an intellect which does not participate of the divine unities, but thinks them only. For in each causal chain the things which are first, and which are conjoined with their monad, are able to participate of the things which are proximately in a superior order: but those which are far distant from the primary monad cannot depend on the natures that proximately belong to a higher order. There is therefore both a divine intellect and an intellect which is intellectual only: one subsisting according to an intellectual peculiarity which it has from its own monad, and from imparticipable intellect; but the other subsisting according to the union which it receives from the participated monad.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXII.**

**Every divine participated intellect is participated by divine souls.**

For if participation assimilates the participant to that which is participated, and renders the former connascent with the latter, it is evident that the participant of a divine intellect must be a divine soul, and dependent on a divine intellect, and that through intellect as a medium it must participate of the deity which it contains. For deity conjoins the soul which participates of it with intellect, and binds the divine to the divine.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXIII.**



**Every intellect which is participated indeed, but is intellectual alone is participated neither by divine souls nor by those which experience a mutation from intellect into a privation of intellect.**

For neither are divine souls of this kind, nor those which participate of intellect. For souls participate of the Gods through intellect, as has been demonstrated, [135] Nor are souls which admit of mutation of this kind. For every intellect is participated by natures which are always intellectual, both in essence and in activity. And this is evident from what has previously been proven.

## **On Soul.**

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXIV.**

**Every soul is either divine, or is that which changes from intellect into a privation of intellect, or that which always remains as a medium between these, but is inferior to divine souls.**

For if divine intellect indeed is participated by divine souls, but that intellect which is intellectual alone by those souls which are neither divine, nor receive a mutation from intelligence into a privation of intellect, — for there are souls of this kind which at one time think and at another do not, — if this be the case, it is evident that there are three genera of souls. And the first of these are divine; but the second are not divine, yet always participate of intellect; and the third are those which at one time change into intellect, and at another into a privation of intellect.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXV.**

**All divine souls are Gods psychically. But all those which participate of an intellectual intellect are the perpetual attendants of the Gods. And all those which are the recipients of mutation are only occasionally the attendants of the Gods.**

For if upon some souls the divine light supernally shines, but others always think, and others again only occasionally participate of this perfection, — if this be the case, the first of these among the multitude of souls will be analogous to the Gods: and the second will always [136] follow the Gods, by reason of always energizing according to intellect, and will depend on divine souls, having the same relation or proportion to them as that which is intellectual to that which is divine. And the souls which only occasionally energize intellectually and follow the Gods neither participate of intellect in a manner always the same, nor are always able to return [to the intelligible] in conjunction with divine souls. For that which only occasionally participates of intellect, can in no way whatsoever be always conjoined with the Gods.<sup>79</sup>

79. Consult Plat. De Legg, X. p. 897; Protrepticus of Iamblichus, cap. 8; Cicero De Officiis III. 10. The last words of Plotinus, "great and uncommon, admirable and sublime," were: "and now the god within me is striving to return to the God of the universe." The following emphatic reminder by Epictetus, (Discourses II. 8.), that the soul is a divinity is apposite: "But you are a superior nature; you are a portion sepa-

rated from the Deity; you have in yourself a certain portion of him. Why then are you ignorant of your own noble descent? Why do you not know whence you came? Will you not remember when you are eating, who you are who eat and whom you feed? . . . When you are in social intercourse, when you are exercising yourself, when you are engaged in discussion, know you not that you are nourishing a god, that you are exercising a god? Wretch! you are carrying about a god with you, and you know it not. Do you think that I mean some God of silver or of gold, and external? You carry him within yourself, and you perceive not that you are polluting him by impure thoughts and dirty deeds. And if an image of God were present, you would not dare to do any of the things which you are doing: but when God himself is present within and sees all and hears all, you are not ashamed of thinking such things and doing such things, ignorant as you are of your own nature and subject to the anger of God."

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXVI.**

**Every soul is an incorporeal essence and separable from the body.**

For if it knows itself, but every thing which knows [137] itself returns to itself, and that which returns to itself is neither body, since every body is incapable of returning to itself, nor is inseparable from body, since that which is inseparable from body is not naturally adapted to revert to itself as it would thereby be separated from body, — hence every soul is neither a corporeal essence, nor inseparable from body. But that the soul knows itself is evident. For if it knows the natures which are above itself, and is naturally able to know itself, much more will it know itself through the causes prior to itself.<sup>80</sup>

80. For inferiors are comprehended in superiors, and particulars in universals; so that he who knows universals knows particulars also, though the reverse of this is not true. The soul therefore by possessing a natural capacity of knowing herself, and things superior to her own nature, will from the illuminations attending her knowledge of the latter know herself in a much more eminent and perspicuous manner. ♦T.

See Hermeias' Commentary on the Phaedrus, p. 114 sq. ed. Couvreur. A translation of his Platonic Demonstration of the Immortality of the Soul may be read in my *Opuscula Platonica*. This Commentary is a very valuable work, and is full of profound thought.

### **PROPOSITION CLXXXVII.**

**Every soul is indestructible and incorruptible.**

For every thing which can in any way whatsoever be dissolved and destroyed is either corporeal and composite, or is allotted its hypostasis in a subject. And that indeed which is dissolved is corrupted because it consists of a multitude of divisible parts: and that of which it is the nature to exist in another vanishes into non-entity when separated from its subject. But the soul is incorporeal and external to every subject, subsisting in itself, and returning to itself. Hence it is indestructible and incorruptible.<sup>81</sup>

81. See the *Phaedo*, p. 106; *Hermeias in Phaedrum*, p. 101 sq.; *Proclus in Plat. Theol.* I. p. 66 sq.; *Nemesius De Natura Hominis*, cap. II. et III. [138]

### PROPOSITION CLXXXVIII.

**Every soul is both life and vital.**

For that to which soul accedes necessarily lives, and that which is deprived of soul at once becomes destitute of life. Either therefore it lives through soul, or through something else, and not through soul. It is however impossible that it should live through something else alone. For every thing which is participated either imparts itself, or something of itself, to its participant. But if it experiences neither of these, it will not be participated. Soul however is participated by that to which it is present, and that which participates of soul is said to be animated. If therefore that which is participated introduces life to animated natures it is either life, or vital alone, or both life and vital. If however soul is alone vital, but not likewise life, it will consist of life and non-life, and will not therefore know itself, nor return to itself. *For knowledge is life, and the gnostic power so far as it is such is vital.*<sup>82</sup> If therefore there is any thing in soul without life, this will not possess essentially the power of knowing. But if soul is life alone it will no longer participate of the intellectual life. For the participant of life is vital and is not life alone, *i.e.*, the first and imparticipable life; but the life which is posterior to this is both vital and life. Soul however is not imparticipable life. And hence it is at the same time both life and vital.<sup>83</sup>

82. This truly divine sentence is derived from the most profound theory, and can alone be understood by those who have deeply studied the six books of Proclus on Plato's Theology. ♦T.

83. Consult the *Phaedo*, cap. 26, and the *Disputatio* of Wyttenbach on Immortality, prefixed to his edition of the *Phaedo*; the *Phaedrus*, p. 246; Plotinus: *En. I. 1. 4 sq.*; Porphyrii *Sententt*, cap. XVI. XVIII.; *Hermeias In Plat. Phaedr.* p. 118 sq.; *Astii Com.* in *Phaedr.* p. 118, 293; *Nemesius De Natura Hominis*, p. 95 sqq. [139]

### PROPOSITION CLXXXIX.

**Every soul is self-vital.**

For if it is able to return to itself, but every thing which returns to itself is self-subsistent, the soul therefore is self-subsistent, and constitutes itself. But it is likewise life and vital, and its hyparxis is in vitality. For the soul imparts life by its very being to the natures to which it is present. And if the participant is fit for participation it immediately becomes animated and vital; soul in effecting this not reasoning nor acting from deliberate choice, nor vivifying by cogitation and judgment, but by its very essence and by that which it is imparting life to the participant. Hence the being of soul is the same as *to live*. If therefore the soul possesses being from itself and this is the same as to live, and it has life essentially, it will impart life to itself, and will possess it from itself. But if this be admitted, soul will be self-vital.

### PROPOSITION CXC.

**Every soul is a medium between impartible natures and the natures which are divisible about bodies.**

For if soul is self-vital and self-subsistent, and has an *hyparxis* separable from bodies, it is exempt from and more excellent than all the natures which are divisible about body: for the corporeal natures are entirely inseparable from their subjects, because they are co-distributed with divisible bulks, depart from themselves, and their own impartibility, and are co-extended with bodies. And though they subsist in lives, these are not the lives of themselves but of participants: and though they exist in essence and in forms, yet they are not the forms of themselves but of those things which are constituted by forms. If therefore soul is none of these, it is a self-subsistent essence, a self-vital life, and [140] a knowledge gnostic of itself. Hence, by reason of these characteristics, it is entirely separable from bodies, but is a participant of life; if this be so, it likewise participates of essence. But it likewise participates of knowledge through other causes. It is evident therefore that the soul is inferior to impartible natures, because it is filled with life externally: and if with life, it is plain that it is likewise externally filled with essence. For prior to life and soul are impartible life and impartible essence. That soul however is not primarily gnostic is evident: since every soul so far as it is soul is life, but not every soul so far as it is soul has knowledge. For a certain soul while it remains soul is ignorant of [real] beings. Soul therefore is not primarily gnostic, nor does it possess knowledge from its very being. Hence it has an essence secondary to those natures which are primarily and by their very being gnostic. And since the essence of soul is divided from its knowledge, soul does not belong to natures [entirely] impartible. But it has been demonstrated that neither does it rank among the natures which are divisible about bodies. Hence it is a medium between the two.

**PROPOSITION CXCI.**

**Every participable soul has an eternal essence, but its action is temporal.**

For either it possesses each eternally, or each temporally; or the one eternally, but the other temporally. It cannot however possess each eternally: for it would be an impartible essence, and the nature of soul would in no respect differ from an intellectual hypostasis, viz. a self-motive from an immovable nature. Nor can it possess each temporally: for thus it would be generated only, and would neither be self-vital, nor self-subsistent. For nothing which is essentially measured by time is [141] self-subsistent: but soul is self-subsistent. For that which returns to itself through activity likewise essentially returns to itself, and proceeds from itself. It follows therefore that every soul is partly eternal, and partly participates of time. Either therefore it is essentially eternal, but participates of time through its action, or vice versa. The latter however is impossible. Hence every participable soul is allotted an eternal essence, but a temporal action or activity.

**PROPOSITION CXCII.**

**Every participable soul ranks among the number of truly existing beings, and is the first of generated natures.**

For if it is essentially eternal it is truly being through its hyparxis, and always is. For that which participates of eternity participates likewise of perpetual existence. But if it is in time according to action, it is generated. For every thing which participates of time, since it is always becoming to be, according to the prior and posterior of time, and is not at once that which it is, is wholly generated. But if every soul is in a certain respect generated through its action, it will be the first of generated natures. For that which is in every respect generated is more remote from eternal natures.

### **PROPOSITION CXCXIII.**

**Every soul subsists proximately from intellect.**

For if it has an immutable and eternal essence, it proceeds from an immovable essence. For that which proceeds from a movable cause, is essentially changed in every respect. The cause therefore of every soul is immovable. But if it proximately subsists from intellect, it is perfected by and returns to intellect. And if it participates of the knowledge which [142] intellect imparts to the natures which are able to partake of it — for all knowledge emanates from intellect to all natures in which it is, and all things have their progression essentially from that to which they naturally return — if this be the case, every soul proceeds from intellect.

### **PROPOSITION CXCIV.**

**Every soul contains all the forms which intellect primarily possesses.**

For if soul proceeds from intellect, and intellect constitutes it; and if intellect subsisting immovably produces all things by its very being, it will likewise impart to soul which it constitutes the essential reasons or productive principles of all things which it contains. For every thing which produces by its very being imparts secondarily to the thing generated by it that which it is itself primarily. The soul therefore contains secondarily the representations of intellectual forms.<sup>84</sup>

84. See Plato *De Repub.* VI. p. 500, X. p. 613; Legg. IV. p. 716; Theaetetus, p. 176.

### **PROPOSITION CXCV.**

**Every soul is all things, containing sensibles paradigmatically, but intelligibles iconically.<sup>85</sup>**

For subsisting as a medium between impartible natures and those which are divisible about body, it produces and constitutes the latter of these, but pre-establishes in itself the causes from which it proceeds. Those [143] things, therefore, of which it is the pre-existent cause it antecedently comprehends paradigmatically or in their pre-formed models. But it has by participation, and as the progeny of first natures, the causes of its subsistence. Hence it antecedently comprehends according to cause all sensible natures, and contains the productive principles of material things immaterially, the principles of corporeal things incorporeally, and without interval the principles of things which are apart in space. But it contains intelligibles and the forms of them through images; so that it receives partly the forms of those which are undivided, by multiplication the forms of those which are unical, and by self-

motion the forms of things which are immovable. Hence the soul is all beings, containing those which are primary by participation, but paradigmatically those which are posterior to its own nature.

85. Aristotle, (*De Anima* III. 8.), says: "Now, however, summarily recapitulating what has been said about the soul, we repeat that the soul is in a certain respect all beings: for all beings are either objects of Sense or objects of Thought; and knowledge and sense are in a certain way the same with their respective objects." Compare Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XVII.

### **PROPOSITION CXCVI.**

**Every participable soul primarily uses a perpetual body, which has an unbegotten and incorruptible hypostasis.<sup>86</sup>**

For if every soul is essentially eternal, and by its very being primarily animates some particular body, it will always animate this body: for the essence of soul is immutable. But if this be the case, that which is animated by it is always animated, and always participates of the life of soul: and that which always lives by a much greater priority always exists. But that which always is, is perpetual. Hence that which is primarily attached to every soul is perpetual. But every participable soul is primarily participated by a certain body, since it is participable and not impartible, and animates its participant by its very being. Every participated soul therefore uses a body which is primarily perpetual, and [144] essentially unbegotten and incorruptible.

86. Consult Plotinus: En. II. 9.16 sq.; Proclus in Plat. Theol. II. 11.

### **PROPOSITION CXCVII.**

**Every soul is an essence vital and gnostic, and, a life essential and gnostic, and is knowledge, essence, and life. All these, the essential, the vital, and the gnostic, subsist in it together; and all are in all, and each is apart from the others.<sup>87</sup>**

For if it is the medium between impartible forms and those which are divided about bodies, it is neither so impartible as all intellectual natures, nor so partible as corporeal forms. Since, therefore, essences, lives and cognitions are divided in corporeal natures, these subsist in souls impartibly, unitedly, and incorporeally, and all of them exist together, through their immateriality and impartibility. Since, likewise, in intellectual natures all things subsist in union, they are distinguished and divided in souls. All things, therefore, subsist together and at the same time apart in these. But if all impartibles subsist together and in one they pervade through each other, and if they are separate they are again divided without confusion; so that each subsists by itself, and all are in all. For in the essence of soul there are both life and knowledge; since every soul would not know itself, if the essence of it was of itself deprived of life and knowledge. And in the life of the soul there are both essence and knowledge: for life without essence and without knowledge belongs to material lives, which are neither able to know themselves, nor are genuine essences: and knowledge which is unessential and without life does not of itself subsist. For all knowledge belongs to that which is vital, and which is of itself allotted an essence.

87. Compare Porphyrii Sententt. cap. XVIII. et cap. XXXIX. [145]

### **PROPOSITION CXCVIII.**

**Every nature which participates of time, and is always moved, is measured by circuits.**

For since it is measured by time, the motion of it likewise participates of the measure and bound of time, and proceeds according to number: but because it is always moved, and this always is not eternal but temporal, it is necessary that it should use circuits. For motion is a mutation from some things to others. But beings are bounded by multitudes and magnitudes. These however being finite, there can neither be a mutation to infinity according to a right line, nor can that which is always moved make its transitions finitely. Hence that which is always moved will proceed from the same to the same, and thus will proceed periodically.

### **PROPOSITION CXCIX.**

**Every mundane soul uses circuits of its proper life, and restitutions to its pristine state.**

For if it is measured by time, it acts transitively and has a peculiar motion. But every nature which is moved and participates of time, if it is perpetual uses circuits, periodically revolves, and proceeding from the same to the same is restored to its former state. And every mundane soul having motion, and energizing in time, will have circuits of motions, and restitutions to its pristine state. For every period of perpetual natures is *apocatastatic* or restorative to a former condition.<sup>88</sup>

88. See Plotinus: En. VI. 9. 8.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* IV. 16. V. 10.; Olympiodorus in *Plat. Alcibiadem Prior*, p. 37, ed. Creuzer. [146]

### **PROPOSITION CC.**

**Every circuit of soul is measured by time. The circuit of other souls is measured by a certain time, but the circuit of the first soul measured by time is measured by the whole of time.<sup>89</sup>**

89. On the first soul see Aristotle: *De Anima* II. 4.: Plotinus; En. II. 9. 4.; Proclus in *Plat. Theol.* I. 12.

For if all motions have prior and posterior, so likewise have circuits, and on this account they participate of time. That also which measures all the circuits of souls is time. But indeed if there were the same circuits of all souls, and they were about the same things, the time of all would be the same. If, however, the restitutions of different souls are different, the periodic time likewise which is restorative to a pristine state is different in different souls.

That the soul, therefore, which is primarily measured by time is measured by the whole of time, is evident. For if time is the measure of all motion, that which is primarily moved will participate of all time, and will be measured by the whole of

time. For if the whole of time did not measure its first participant, it would not measure anything else, according to the whole of itself. That all other souls however are measured by certain measures which are more partial than the whole of time, is evident from what has been demonstrated. For if these souls are more partial than the soul which primarily participates of time, neither can they adapt their circuits to the whole of time. But the multitude of their restitutions will be parts of the one circuit and restitution through which the soul that primarily participates of time returns to its pristine state. For a more partial participation belongs to an inferior power, but a more total to a greater power. Other souls, therefore, are not naturally adapted to [147] receive the whole temporal measure in one life, because they are allotted an order inferior to that of the soul which is primarily measured by time.

### **PROPOSITION CCI.**

**All divine souls have triple energies: one as souls, another as receiving a divine intellect, and another as attached to the Gods. And they provide for the whole of things as Gods, but know all things through an intellectual life, and move bodies through a self-motive essence.**

For because they psychically participate of the natures which are superior to them, and are not simply souls but divine souls, and have an order in the psychical extent analogous to the Gods, they energize not only psychically but likewise divinely, being allotted a divine summit of their essence, and because they likewise have an intellectual hypostasis, through which they are placed under intellectual essences. Hence they not only energize divinely, but likewise intellectually: constituting one action according to the one which they contain, but the other according to intellect. A third action (activity) is present to them according to their own hyparxis, which is motive indeed of things naturally alter-motive, but is vivific of those which possess an adventitious life. For this is the characteristic work of every soul; but the activities which are intellectual and providential they have through participation.

### **PROPOSITION CCII.**

**All souls attending upon and always following the Gods are inferior to divine, but are developed above partial souls.**

For divine souls participate of intellect and deity, and hence are at the same time intellectual and divine, and the leaders of other souls, just as the Gods likewise are the leaders of all beings. But partial souls are deprived [148] of an attachment to intellect, because they are not able to participate proximately of an intellectual essence. Nor would they fall from intellectual energy, if they essentially participated of intellect, as has been demonstrated. Hence the souls which always follow the Gods are of a mediate condition: for though they receive a perfect intellect, and through this surpass partial souls, yet they are not attached to the divine unities. For the intellect which they participate is not divine.

### **PROPOSITION CCIII.**

**Of every psychical multitude, divine souls are greater in power than other souls, but less in number. But those which always follow divine souls have a mediate**



**order among all souls, both in power end, quantity. And, partial souls are inferior in power to the others, but proceed into a greater number.**

For divine souls are more allied to The One, on account of a divine hyparxis, but souls of a mediate rank through the participation of intellect, and those of the last order are essentially dissimilar to both those of the mediate and those of the first rank. Among perpetual natures, however, those which are nearer to The One are more single in number, and more contracted in multitude, than those which are more remote from it. But those which are more remote from The One are more multiplied. The powers therefore of superior souls are greater, and have the same ratio to those of souls in the second rank which the divine has to the intellectual, and the intellectual to the psychical peculiarity. And the quantities of inferior souls likewise are more in number. For that which is more remote from The One is a greater multitude and that which is nearer to it is a less multitude. [149]

#### **PROPOSITION CCIV.**

**Every divine soul is a leader of many souls which always follow the Gods, and of a still greater number of those which occasionally receive this order.**

For since it is divine it is necessary that it should be allotted an order which is the leader of all things, and which has a primary rank among souls. For in all beings that which is divine is the leader of wholes. It is likewise requisite that every divine soul should neither alone preside over the souls which perpetually follow the Gods, nor over those alone which are occasionally their attendants. For if any divine soul should alone preside over those which occasionally follow the Gods, how can there be a contact between these and a divine soul, since they are entirely different from it, and neither proximately participate of intellect, and much less of the Gods? But if it only presides over those which always follow the Gods, how is it that the causal chain proceeds as far as to these [alone]? For thus intellectual natures would be the last, and unprolific, and unadapted to perfect and elevate. It is necessary, therefore, that the souls which follow the Gods, and energize through intellect, and which are elevated to intellects more partial than divine intellects, should primarily depend on every divine soul: and that second to these it is necessary that there should be the partial souls, which through the divine souls as media are able to participate of intellect and a divine life. For through those which always participate of a superior condition those which only occasionally participate of it are perfected. And again it is necessary that about every divine soul there should be more souls which only occasionally follow the Gods than those which always attend on them. For the power of the monad always proceeds into multitude, through diminution; deficient in [150] power, but redundant in number. And every soul likewise of those which always follow the Gods is the leader of a multitude of partial souls, imitating in this a divine soul; and elevates many souls to the primary monad of the whole causal chain. Every divine soul, therefore, is the leader of many souls which always follow the Gods, but presides over a still greater number of those which only occasionally receive this order.

#### **PROPOSITION CCV.**

**Every partial soul has the same ratio to the soul under which it is essentially arranged, as the vehicle of the one has to the vehicle of the other.**

For if the distribution of vehicles to all souls is according to nature, it is necessary that the vehicle of every partial soul should have the same ratio to the vehicle of the soul which ranks as a whole, as the essence of the one has to the essence of the other. The distribution, however, is according to nature. For the things which primarily participate are spontaneously conjoined with the natures which they participate. If, therefore, as a divine soul is to a divine body, so likewise is a partial soul to a partial body, each soul essentially participating, — therefore that which was first asserted is true, that the vehicles of souls have the same ratio to each other, as the souls themselves of which they are the vehicles.<sup>90</sup>

90. See Porphyrii Sententt. VII. VIII.; Nemesis *De Natura Hominis* cap. III.; Iamblichus in Stobaeus, Eclog. I. cap. 52. (These excerpts are from Iamblichus' lost book, Περὶ Ψυχῆς). On the οχημα or vehicle of the soul, consult Proclus' Commentary on the Timaeus, p. 265 sq. Vol. III. ed. Diehl. On the Universal Soul and the particular soul, see Plotinus: En. IV. I., En. IV. 2. 2.; and the Timaeus, p. 34, which is the fount of all subsequent insights on the subject. [151]

## PROPOSITION CCVI.

**Every partial soul is able to descend infinitely into generation, and to reascend from generation to real being.<sup>91</sup>**

[152]

For if it at one time follows the Gods, but at another falls from the striving upwards to the divine nature [and an abiding with it], and participates alike of intellect and the privation of intellect, it is evident that it is alternatively conversant with generation and the Gods. For since it is not for an infinite time with the Gods, it will not for the whole of the succeeding time be conversant with bodies. For that which has no temporal beginning will never have an end, and that which has [153] no end is necessarily without a beginning. It follows, therefore, that every partial soul makes circuits of ascents from and of descents into generation, and that this must be unceasing through infinite time. Every partial soul, therefore, is able to descend and reascend infinitely. And this experience all souls must undergo.<sup>92</sup>

91. Genesis, ἡ γενεσις. Generation; creation; nativity; rank; a period of time; *philosophically used to denote the transition-sphere between the state of οὐσία or essence, from the noumenal state to the phenomenal into the world of nature.* The movement toward phenomenal existence; the μεταληψις or sharing of dual life by a change in mode of being; a becoming *as distinguished from really being*; relative existence; the passing of the soul or spiritual essence from eternity into nature. On the ninth day of the Eleusinian Mysteries, the worshippers placed two vessels of wine, one at the East and the other at the West, and emptied them in turn, pronouncing the words υἱε [son] and τοκυῖε [genitrix], as implying that man was the offspring of eternity, and nature his mother. The whole paraphernalia and ceremonial of the Mysteries related to the coming of man into the natural world, and his effort to go hence. "I think we ought to define what that is which is ever-existent and has no *genesis*; and that which is in a state of transition *γενεσις* or becoming, but never really *is*. There are three distinct modes that preceded the establishing of this cosmical universe: being, space, and transition" (γενεσις). PLATO: *Timaeus*, IX, XXVII.

"Others of the heavenly faculties go forth from them into the nature-sphere of the universe, and into the cosmical universe itself, passing in due order through the sphere of transition and therefrom pervading every part." IAMBlichus: *Mysteries*, I., XVIII. From γίγνομαι, to become.

This gradation, as here set forth, is sufficiently intelligible to the expert philosophical reader; but it should not be regarded as profaning or popularizing the subject unduly, to attempt an explanation for the convenience of the novitiate, who may not have well learned this mode of speaking and classification. The cosmical universe is here treated as being in two provinces or departments: nature or φύσις, the maternal or producing sphere, which includes all things in the visible universe, and *genesis*, which Mr. Taylor and the other writers render by the term *generation*. The word, owing to its common meaning in the English language, becomes often an unnecessary cause of obscurity when appearing in philosophical discourses. The Greek word is from the verb to become; to exist as an objective entity; to engender. Hence it means the sphere of transition or changing; and is here represented as deriving potencies from the astral and divine world and communicating them to the natural. This idea pervades the whole Platonic philosophy. Thus we have the illustration of Plutarchus, that the three Fates, or Weird Sisters, supervise all: one, in the sun, giving the genetic principle; the second, in the moon, mingling it with the lower elements; and the third, in the earth, ordering the results. The divine essence is η ουσία or that which is. Divine essences, as the preceding discourse has shown, are therefore permanent, and of course απαθες,— impassible or unsusceptible of change. It may have been noticed that they are often mentioned in the neuter gender, as including both energy and potency in themselves undivided, like the old androgynous divinities of Mythology. The *genesis* of the philosophers was the becoming objective and individual; externalization, "becoming;" existence as distinguished from being or essence; *transition* from the unconditioned to the conditioned; from the Real or noumenal to the phenomenal; from the permanent to the variable: from the eternal to the temporal. The contrast between the two forms, existence or transition, and real being, is very distinctly exhibited in the remarkable utterance of Jesus in the Gnostic *Gospel according to John*: "Before Abraham came into the transition-sphere, I was the ever-being."

The φύσις (physis) or department of nature is the ulterior, the outgrowing; and receives the potencies of life from the world of causation through the intermediary sphere of transition. Sometimes the departments of transition and production, "nature" and "generation," appear to be treated as one — the *Cosmos*, or universe. The lower orders which belong there are denominated μεριστος or partible, as being divided and apart from Real Being. ♦Dr. Alexander Wilder: in his *Platonic Technology*, (published in *The Platonist*), and in notes to his translation of Iamblichus.

92. On the descent and reascent of souls from and to the Intelligible World, see the *Phaedrus*, p. 248, and the Commentary of Hermias; Prolegomena of Stallbaum to his edition (1820) of the *Philebus*, p. XXV sq.; Plotinus: En. IV. 8., (On the descent of the Soul into bodies); Nemesius *De Natura Hominis*, p. 45 sqq., p. 91 sqq., p. 111 sqq., ed. Matthaei.

One of the greatest intellectual misfortunes which has befallen mankind is the loss of Porphyry's work, *On the return of the Soul* (Περὶ ἀνοδοῦ τῆς Ψυχῆς), several

quotations from which St. Augustine has preserved in his *De Civitate Dei*. Among the principal propositions maintained by Porphyry in this book was, "that we must fly from all body, in order that the soul may abide in felicity with the Deity."

### **PROPOSITION CCVII.**

**The vehicle of every partial soul is fabricated by an immovable cause.**

For if it is perpetually and connascently attached to the soul which uses it, and by cognation is immutable in essence, it is allotted its hypostasis from an immovable cause. For every thing which is generated from movable causes is essentially changed. Moreover, every soul has a perpetual body, which primarily participates of it. Hence the cause of a partial soul, and therefore of its vehicle, is immovable, and on this account supermundane.

### **PROPOSITION CCVIII.**

**The vehicle of every partial soul is immaterial, essentially indivisible, and impassive.**

For if it proceeds from an immovable fabrication, [154] and is perpetual, it will have an immaterial and impassive hypostasis. For the things which are naturally passive in essence are all mutable and material, and because they subsist differently at different times are attached to movable causes. Hence, likewise, they receive an all-various mutation, since they are moved in conjunction with their principal causes. But that the vehicle of every partial soul is indivisible, is manifest. For every thing which is divided, so far as it is divided is corrupted, because it departs from the whole, and from its continuity. If, therefore, the vehicle is essentially immutable and impassive, it will be indivisible.<sup>93</sup>

93. See Plotinus: En. III. 6. 1 sqq; Porphyrii Sententt. XIX.

### **PROPOSITION CCIX.**

**The vehicle of every partial soul descends indeed with the addition of more material vestments, but becomes united to the soul by an ablation of every thing material, and a recurrence to its proper form, analogous to the soul which uses it.**<sup>94</sup>

[155]

For the soul indeed descends irrationally, assuming irrational lives; but it ascends, laying aside all the generation-producing powers, with which it was invested in its descent, and becoming pure returns to the pristine condition of its nature. For the vehicle imitates the lives of the souls which use it, and since they are every where moved it is moved in conjunction with them. By its circulations it likewise represents the intellections of some souls, but the falling of others through their inclinations into generation, and the purifications of others through the circumductions which lead to an immaterial nature. For because it is vivified by the very essence of souls, and is connascent with them, it is ail-variously changed in conjunction with their energies;

follows them every where, becomes co-passive with them, is restored to its pristine state together with them when they are purified, and is elevated when they are elevated, and desires its own perfection. For every thing is perfected when it obtains its proper perfection.

94. The phraseological fount of this is in the Gorgias, p. 523; "Now many, said he, whose souls are poor and wicked are clothed with fair bodies and nobility and wealth," etc. Proclus (Com. on the First Alcibiades, p. 138, ed. Creuzer): "And hence Plato calls the last vestment of souls the love of fame." Athenaeus records (XL 118.), on the authority of Dioscorides, in his Memorabilia, that Plato said "the last vestment, the desire of fame, we put off in death itself." Athenaeus, who was a scurrilous ignoramus and calumniator, incredible as it may seem, quotes this to prove that Plato was very ambitious and vainglorious! Porphyry, in his treatise *On Abstinence*, a book which cannot be too highly praised, says (I. 31.): "We must therefore put off our many vestments, both this visible and corporeal garment and those with which we are internally clothed, which are proximate to our physical garments; and we must enter the course free and unclothed, striving for [the most glorious of all prizes] the Olympia of the soul."

The descent of the soul into body separates it from more divine souls, from whom it was filled with thought and power and purity, and conjoins it to generation and nature and material things, from which it is filled with oblivion and wandering and ignorance. For in descending multiform lives and manifold vestments grow upon or adhere to the soul from the universe, drawing it down into a mortal composition, and darkening its vision of real being. It is requisite therefore that the soul which is about to be led rightly from hence to that ever-vigilant nature should amputate those secondary and tertiary powers which are attached to its essence, in the same manner as weeds, stones and shells are attached to the marine Glaucus; should restrain its impulses from externally proceeding, and recollect true beings and a divine essence, from which it descended, and to which it is right that the whole of our life should hasten. -Proclus: Commentary on the First Alcibiades, (p. 75, Vol. III. ed. Cousin.) [156]

## **PROPOSITION CCX.**

**Every connascent vehicle of the soul always has the same figure and magnitude. But it appears to be greater and less and of a dissimilar figure through the additions and ablations of other bodies.**

For if it derives its essence from an immovable cause, it is evident that both its figure and its magnitude are defined by this cause, and each is immutable and invariable. But at different times it appears to be different, as likewise greater and less. Hence through other bodies, added from the material elements, and again taken away, it exhibits a different appearance both in quantity and form.

## **PROPOSITION CCXI.**

**Every partial soul descending into generation descends as a whole; nor does one part of it remain on high, and another part descend.**

For if part of the soul remains in the Intelligible World it will always think, either without transition, or by a transitive process. But if without transition it will be pure intellect and not a part of the soul, and the partial soul will directly participate of intellect. This however is impossible.<sup>95</sup> But if it thinks by a transitive process, then out of that which always thinks and that which occasionally thinks one essence will be formed. This however is likewise impossible. For these always differ, as has been demonstrated. Moreover, it is absurd to suppose that the highest part of the soul which is ever perfect does not rule over the other powers, and cause them to be perfect. Every partial soul, therefore, descends as a whole.<sup>96</sup>

95. Because only the Universal Soul participates directly of Intellect.

96. Creuzer wrongly asserts that the Platonists did not agree [157] about the descent of the soul, and that one point on which they were at variance was, whether the soul descends as a whole or only a part of it. On all the fundamental principles of Platonic Thought the genuine successors of Plato are at one, though on many propositions, viewed from different standpoints, they may differ, for they were independent thinkers. On the question, as to whether the soul descends as a whole, or a part of it remains in the Intelligible World, the difference is only superficial. Damascius held that the whole soul descends, and yet he says (Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, p. 254, Vol. II. ed. Ruelle): "Moreover, as the self-movable (self-active) nature always uses its self-active power it changes, descending and ascending, It acts essentially, therefore, because the self-active nature moves and is moved essentially..... Further, the eternal essence is absolutely immutable, nor does it at one time descend into generation, and at another ascend from generation: it is always on high. If so, its action will always be on high. So in a certain respect the notion of Plotinus that the whole soul does not descend is true, but he does not clearly express or develop this thought. For how is it possible that, one part of the soul remaining in the Intelligible World, another part would be in the ultimate evil? Hence the essence of the soul descends, becoming more partial instead of unical, and genesiurgic instead of essential."

Damascius further informs us (p. 259) that, according to the great Iamblichus, in his book *On the Migration of the Soul from Body*, "there is one genus of souls, the highest through participation, which descends into generation, but does not altogether (ομνς) descend."

"There were also seasons, and these not unfrequent, during this period of my initiation, when I found myself in a condition of the real nature of which I seemed to find an explanation only when I came upon the writings of the foremost of all the great Neoplatonic school of mystics, Plotinus. This was a condition in which the enhancement of power, physical and mental, was so extraordinary, as to make it seem that it was only necessary to will or to speak to work some great miracle, whether of healing or of destroying. It was not in the least as if one were possessed and filled by something other than one's proper self; but as if that self, instead of but partially animating the organism, had descended into it in plenitude, completely suffusing it with the spirit, to the indefinite enhancement of every faculty, one effect of which was to suggest the idea that the spiritual part of man does not, as a rule, reside within the man, except [158] to a very limited extent, but hovers over him, descending into him in varying measure according to circumstances." ♦ *Life of Anna Kingsford* by Edward Maitland, (p. 132, Vol. I.) Maitland was one of the writers of *The Perfect Way*, the

most mystical book of modern times, and a work of rare interest and value to all students of Occult Science.

"But just as we have seen the supreme Nous resolving itself into a multitude of individual intelligences, so also does the Cosmic Soul produce many lesser or partial souls of which our own is one. Now these derivative souls cannot all be equal, for that would be to defeat the purpose of creation, which is to realize all the possibilities of creation from the highest to the lowest. Thus each has an office corresponding to her place in the scale of perfection.†

[† "Readers of Pope's *Essay on Man* will recognize this argument. It was, in fact, borrowed from Plotinus by Leibnitz, and handed on through Bolingbroke to Pope. There is no better introduction to Neo-Platonism than this beautiful poem."

Unquestionably there is much Platonism in Pope's Essay, and the poem is worthy of study, but neither Bolingbroke nor Pope had any comprehensive knowledge of the Philosophy of Plato, and had probably never even heard of Plotinus and the other Platonists, falsely called "Neo-Platonists."]

We may say of the human soul that she stoops to conquer. Her mission is to cope with the more recalcitrant forms of matter. It is to the struggle with their impurities that the troubles and passions of our life are due. By yielding to earthly temptations we suffer a second fall, and one much more real than the first; by overcoming them, as is perfectly in our power to do, we give scope and exercise to faculties which would otherwise have remained dormant and unknown. Moreover, our soul retains the privilege of returning to its former abode, enriched by the experience acquired in this world, and with that clearer perception of good which the knowledge of its opposite alone can supply. Nay, paradoxical as the assertion may seem, she has not entirely descended to earth, but remains in partial communication with the noetic world by virtue of her reasoning faculty; that is to say, when its intuitions are not darkened and disturbed by the triumph of sensuous impressions over the lower soul." ♦ Benn: *The Greek Philosophers*, (Vol. II. pp. 306-7. This passage is quoted as fairly illustrative, but Mr. Benn's interpretation as a whole of the thought of Plotinus is glaringly misleading and notably erroneous.

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[159]

## **Additional Notes and Elucidative Excerpts.**

### **I.**

P. 20. The truth of this may be exemplified in light. Thus for instance we may see many species of light; one kind emanating from the sun, another from fire and the stars, another from the moon, and another from the eyes of many animals. But this light though various is everywhere similar, and discovers in its operations a unity of nature. On account of its uniformity, therefore, it requires one principle and not

different principles. But the sun is the only principle of all mundane light: and though there are many participants of light posterior to the solar orb, yet they scatter their uniform light through one solar nature, property and power. But if we again seek for the principle of light in the sun, we cannot say that the solar orb is the principle; for the various parts of it diffuse many illuminations. There will therefore be many principles. But we now require one first principle of light. And if we say that the soul of the sun generates light, we must observe that this is not effected by her psychical multiplicity, or she would diffuse different lights. Hence we must assert that she generates visible by intellectual light. But again this production does not subsist through intellectual variety, but rather through the unity of intellect which is its flower and summit. This unity is a symbol of that simple unity which is the principle of the universe. And to this principle the solar intellect is united by its unity, and through this it becomes a God. This divine unity of the sun therefore is the principle of the uniform light of the world, in the same manner as simple unity and goodness is the source of intelligible light to all intelligible natures. ♦T.

[160]

## II.

P. 40. The truth of this reasoning may be evinced by the following considerations. Every thing which is measured by time, and such is every corporeal nature, depends on time for the perfection of its being. But time is composed of the past, present, and future. And if we conceive that any one of these parts is taken away from the nature with which it is connected, that nature must immediately perish. Time therefore is so essentially and intimately united with the natures which it measures that their being such as it is depends on the existence of time. But time, as it is evident, is perpetually flowing, and this in the most rapid manner imagination can conceive. It is evident therefore that the natures to which it is essential must subsist in a manner equally transitory and flowing; since, unless they flowed in conjunction with time, they would be separated from it, and would consequently perish. Hence as we cannot affirm with propriety of any part of time that it *is* — since even before we can form the assertion the present time is no more ♦so, with respect to all corporeal natures, from their subsistence in time, before we can say they exist they lose all identity of being.

Such then is the unreal condition of every thing existing in time, or of every thing corporeal and entangled with matter. But this shadowy essence of body is finely unfolded by Plotinus, in the 6th. book of his 3rd. Ennead, as follows: "Being properly so called is neither body, nor is subject to corporeal affections; but body and its properties belong to the region of non-entity. But you will ask, how is it possible that visible matter should possess no real being; that matter in which stones and mountains reside, the solid earth, and bodies, which mutually resist, — since bodies, which impel [161] each other, confess by their collision the reality of their existence? You will likewise ask, in what manner things which neither strike against nor resist each other, which neither externally act nor internally suffer, nor are in any respect the objects of sight, viz. soul and intellect, are to be reckoned true and real beings? We reply, that on the contrary things more corpulent are more sluggish and inert, as is evident in bulky masses of earth. But whatever is less ponderous is more movable, and the more elevated the more movable. Hence fire, the most movable of all the elements, flies as



it were from a corporeal nature. Moreover, as it appears to me, whatever is more sufficient to itself disturbs others less and brings less inconvenience; but such things as are more ponderous and terrene, unable from their defect of being to raise themselves on high, and becoming debile and languid, strike and oppress surrounding bodies by their falling ruin and sluggish weight. Since it is evident that bodies destitute of life fall with molestation on any proximate substance, and more vehemently impel and pain whatever is endued with sense. On the contrary animated beings, participating more of entity, by how much the more of being they possess by so much the more harmless they impinge their neighboring bodies. Hence motion, which is a kind of life or soul, or an imitation of life in bodies, is more present to whatever is less corpulent; as if more of body was necessarily produced, where a defect of being happens in a greater degree. Again, it will more manifestly appear from passivity that whatever is more corpulent is more passive, — earth in a greater degree than the other elements, and the rest in a similar proportion. For some things when divided suddenly return to their former union, when no [162] obstacle prevents their conjunction. But from the section of a terrene body the divided portions always remain separate, as if destitute of natural vigor, and without any inherent desire of union and consent. Hence they are ready by every trifling impulse to remain as they are impelled; to rush from the embraces of bound, and hasten into multitude and non-entity. So that whatever becomes corporeal in an eminent degree, as falling fast into non-entity, has but little power of recalling itself into one. And on this account ponderous and vehement concussions are attended with ruin, when by mutual rushing one thing impels another. But when debility runs against debility, the one is valid against the other, in the same manner as non-entity rushing on non-entity. And this we think a sufficient refutation of their opinion who only place being in the genus of body, persuaded by the testimony of impulses and concussions, and the phantasms perceived through the senses, which testify that sense is the only standard of truth. Such as these are affected in a manner similar to those in a dream, who imagine that the perceptions of sleep are true. For sense is alone the employment of the dormant soul; since as much of the soul as is merged in body so much of it sleeps. But a true elevation and a true vigilance are a resurrection from and not with the dull mass of body. For a resurrection with body indeed is only a transmigration from sleep to sleep, and from dream to dream, like a man passing in the dark from bed to bed. But that elevation is perfectly true, which entirely rises from the dead weight of bodies. For these, possessing a nature repugnant to soul, possess something opposite to essence. And this is further evident from their generation, and their continual flowing and decay, which are properties entirely foreign from the nature of being substantial and real." -T.

[163]

### III.

P. 84. To such as understand these Elements this argument for the existence of a multitude of Gods is perfectly demonstrative and clear. Indeed as every production of nature possesses the power of generating its similar, it is much more necessary that the First Cause of all should generate a multitude the most similar to "himself that can possibly be conceived. For every being produces that which is similar prior to the dissimilar; as indeed a contrary mode of proceeding would be absurd and impossible. The immediate or first productions therefore of the First God must be a multitude of Gods — or otherwise his first progeny would not be perfectly similar to himself. Nor

does this doctrine in any respect derogate from the dignity of the Supreme God, as the ignorant suppose, but on the contrary tends to exalt his majesty and evince the ineffable beneficence and perfection of his nature. For though it establishes a multitude of Gods, yet it teaches that they are dependent on the First, who is perfectly incomprehensible and without participation. So that it leads us to consider the subordinate Deities as so many lesser luminaries shining before the presence of the Sun of good, and encircling with awful grandeur his ineffable radiance and occult retreats. And that this doctrine fully displays his superlative goodness is sufficiently manifest, since by a contrary assertion we must ascribe imperfection to the fountain of excellence, and leave Deity impotent and barren. ♦T.

I rejoice in the opportunity which is afforded me of presenting the *truly* philosophic reader, in the present work, with a treasure of Grecian theology; of a theology which was first mystically and symbolically promulgated by Orpheus, afterwards disseminated enigmatically through images by Pythagoras, and in the [164] last place scientifically unfolded by Plato and his genuine disciples. The peculiarity, indeed, of this theology is, that it is no less scientific than sublime; and that by a geometrical series of reasoning, originating from the most self-evident truths, it develops all the deified progressions from the Ineffable Principle of things, and accurately exhibits to our view all the links of that golden chain of which Deity is the one extreme, and body the other.

That, also, which is most admirable and laudable in this theology is, that it produces in the mind properly prepared for its reception the most pure, holy, venerable, and exalted conceptions of the Great Cause of all. For it celebrates this immense Principle as something superior even to being itself; as exempt from the whole of things, of which it is nevertheless ineffably the source, and does not therefore think fit to connumerate it with any triad, or order of beings. Indeed, it even apologizes for attempting to give an appropriate name to this Principle, which is in reality ineffable, and ascribes the attempt to the imbecility of human nature, which, striving intently to behold it, gives the appellation of the most simple of its conceptions to that which is beyond all knowledge and all conception. Hence it denominates it The One, and The Good; by the former of these names indicating its transcendent simplicity, and by the latter its subsistence as the object of desire to all beings. For all things desire good. At the same time, however, it asserts that these appellations are in reality nothing more than the parturitions of the soul, which, standing as it were in the vestibules of the adytum of Deity, announce nothing pertaining to the ineffable but only indicate her spontaneous tendencies towards it, and belong rather to the immediate offspring of the first God than to the First itself. Hence as the result of this most venerable conception of the Supreme, [165] when it ventures not only to denominate the ineffable but also to assert something of its relation to other things, it considers this as pre-eminently its peculiarity, that it is the Principle of Principles; it being necessary that the characteristic property of principle, after the same manner as other things, should not begin from multitude, but should be collected into one monad as a summit, and which is the Principle of all principles. Conformably to this Proclus, in the second book of this work, says, with matchless magnificence of diction, — "Let us as it were celebrate the First God, not as establishing the earth and the heavens, nor as giving subsistence to souls, and the generations of all animals; for he produced these indeed but among the last of things; but prior to these let us celebrate him as unfolding into light the whole intelligible and intellectual genera of Gods, together with all the

supermundane and mundane divinities — as the God of all Gods, the unity of all unities, and beyond the first adyta — as more ineffable than all silence, and more unknown than all essence, — as holy among the holies, and concealed in the intelligible Gods."

The scientific reasoning from which this dogma is deduced is the following: As the Principle of all things is The One, it is necessary that the progression of beings should be continued, and that no vacuum should intervene either in incorporeal or corporeal natures. It is also necessary that every thing which has a natural progression should proceed through similitude. In consequence of this it is likewise necessary that every producing principle should generate a number of the same order with itself, viz. Nature, a natural number; Soul, one that is psychical; and Intellect, an intellectual number. For if whatever possesses a power of generating generates similars prior to dissimilars, every cause must deliver its own form and characteristic peculiarity [166] to its progeny; and before it generates that which gives subsistence to progressions far distant and separate from its nature, it must constitute things proximate to itself according to essence, and conjoined with it through similitude. It is therefore necessary from these premises, since there is one unity the Principle of the universe, that this unity should produce from itself prior to every thing else a multitude of natures characterized by unity, and a number the most of all things allied to its cause; and these natures are no other than the Gods.

According to this theology, therefore, from the immense Principle of Principles, in which all things causally subsist, absorbed in superessential light, and involved in unfathomable depths, a beauteous progeny of principles proceeds, all largely partaking of the Ineffable, all stamped with the occult characters of Deity, all possessing an overflowing fullness of good. From these dazzling summits, these ineffable blossoms, these divine propagations, Being, Life, Intellect, Soul, Nature, and Body depend; Monads suspended from Unities, deified natures proceeding from Deities. Each of these Monads, too, is the leader of a series which extends from itself to the last of things, and which while it proceeds from at the same time abides in and returns to its leader. And all these principles and all their progeny are finally centered and rooted by their summits in the First, great, all-comprehending One. Thus all beings proceed from and are comprehended in the First Being; all intellects emanate from one First Intellect; all souls from one First Soul; all natures blossom from one First Nature; and all bodies proceed from the vital and luminous Body of the world. And, lastly, all these great monads are comprehended in the First One, from which both they and all their depending series are unfolded [167] into light. Hence this First One is truly the Unity of unities, the Monad of monads, the Principle of principles, the God of Gods, one and all things, and yet one prior to all.

No objections of any weight, no arguments but such as are sophistical, can be urged against this most sublime theory, which is so congenial to the unperverted conceptions of the human mind that it can only be treated with ridicule and contempt in degraded, barren, and barbarous ages. Ignorance and priestcraft, however, have hitherto conspired to defame those inestimable works,<sup>1</sup> in which this and many other grand and important dogmas can alone be found; and the theology of the Greeks has been attacked with all the insane fury of ecclesiastical zeal, and all the imbecile flashes of mistaken wit, by men whose conceptions on the subject, like those of a man

between sleeping and waking, have been *turbid and wild, phantastic and confused, preposterous and vain*.

1. Viz. the present and other works of Proclus, together with those of Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, Ammonius, Damascius, Olympiodorus, and Simplicius.

Indeed, that after the great incomprehensible Cause of all a divine multitude subsists, co-operating with this Cause in the production and government of the universe, has always been and is still admitted by all nations and all religions, however much they may differ in their opinions respecting the nature of the subordinate deities, and the veneration which is to be paid to them by man; and however barbarous the conceptions of some nations on this subject may be when compared with those of others.

◆T.

### IIIb

P. 85. That the Principle of all things is something beyond Intellect and Being itself was asserted by the most ancient Pythagoreans, as well as by Plato and [168] his best disciples, as the following citations will abundantly evince.

And in the first place this is evident from a fragment of Archytas, a most ancient Pythagorean, On the Principles of things, preserved by Stobaeus, Eclog. Phys.,<sup>2</sup> in which the following extraordinary passage occurs:

ωστ'

αναγκα τρεις ειμεν τας αρχας, ταν τε εστω των πραγματος και ταν μ  
ορφω και το εξ αυτω κινητικον και πρατον τα δυγαμι. το δε τοιουτον  
ου νοον μονον ειμεν δει, αλλα και νοω τι κρεσσον. νοω δε κρεσσον ε  
ντι, οπερ ονομαθομεν θεον, φανερον.

2. P. 280 Vol. I. ed. Wachsmuth.

Taylor used an imperfect text, I have given the original of the passage as it appears in the latest and best edition, and corrected his translation accordingly.

— *i.e.* "So that it is necessary that there be three principles, viz. that which is the substance of things (or matter), form, and that which is of itself motive, and primal in power. With respect to the last of which it is not only necessary that it should be intellect, but something better than intellect. But that which is better than intellect is evidently the same with that which we denominate God."

It must here however be observed that by the word god we are not only to understand the first cause but every god: for, according to the Pythagoric theology every deity, considered according to the characteristic of his nature, is superior to intellectual essence. Agreeably to the above passage is that also of Broctonius, as cited by Syrianus in Arist. Metaphys.,<sup>3</sup> who expressly asserts that the first cause

νοῦ παντος καὶ οὐσίας δυνάμει καὶ πρεσβείᾳ ὑπερεχει — "surpasses every intellect and essence both in power and dignity."

3. P. 166 ed, Kroll, Berol, 1902.

Again, according to the same Syrianus, p. 168 (ed. Kroll), we are informed "that the Pythagoreans called [169] God the one, as the cause of union to the universe, and on account of his superiority to every being, to all life, and to all-perfect intellect. But they denominated him the measure of all things, on account of his conferring on all things through illumination essence and bound; and containing and bounding all things by the ineffable supereminence of his nature, which is extended beyond every bound." And, again, this is confirmed by Clinius the Pythagorean, as cited by Syrianus, p. 168 (ed. Kroll): "That which is *the one* and *the measure of all things* is not only entirely exempt from bodies and mundane concerns, but likewise from intelligibles themselves, since he is the venerable principle of beings, the measure of intelligibles, ingenerable, eternal, and alone (μονον), possessing absolute dominion (κυριωδης), and himself manifesting himself (αυτο εαυτο δηλουν)." This fine passage I have translated agreeably to the manuscript corrections of the learned Gale, the original of which he has not inserted. To this we may likewise add the testimony of Philolaus who, as Syrianus informs us, p. 166, knew that cause which is superior to the two first elements of things, *bound and infinite*. For, says he, "Philolaus asserts that the deity established *bound and infinite*: by bound indeed exhibiting every co-ordination, which is more allied to *the one*; but by infinity a nature subjected to *bound*. And prior to these two principles he places one, and a singular cause, separated from the universality of things, which Archainetus denominates a cause prior to cause; but which, according to Philolaus, is the principle of all things." To all these respectable authorities for the superessential nature of the first cause, we may add the testimony of Sextus Empiricus himself. For in his books against the Mathematicians (p. 425) he informs us "that the Pythagoreans placed *the one* as transcending the genus of things which are essentially understood." In which [170] passage by 'things which are essentially understood' nothing more is meant than intelligible essences, as is obvious to every tyro in the Pythagoric philosophy.

But in consequence of this doctrine of the ancients concerning The One or the first principle of things, we may discover the meaning and propriety of those appellations given by the Pythagoreans to unity, according to Photius and others: such as αλαμπια, σκοτωδια, αμιξια, βαραθρον υποχθονιον, Απολλων, etc., viz. *obscurity or without illumination, darkness, without mixture, a subterranean profundity, Apollo* etc. For, considered as ineffable, incomprehensible, and superessential, he may be very properly called *obscurity, darkness, and a subterranean profundity*: but, considered as perfectly simple and one, he may with no less propriety be denominated *without mixture* and *Apollo*; since Apollo signifies a privation of multitude. "For (says Plotinus) the Pythagoreans denominated the first God *Apollo*, according to a more secret signification, implying a negation of many." (Ennead. 5, lib. 5). To which we may add, that the epithets *darkness* and *obscurity* wonderfully agree with the appellation of a thrice unknown darkness, employed by the Egyptians, according to Damascius, in their most mystical invocations of the first God; and at the same time afford a sufficient reason for the remarkable silence of the most ancient philosophers and poets concerning this highest and ineffable cause.

This silence is indeed remarkably obvious in Hesiod, when in his Theogony he says:

ἦτοι μὲν πρωτιστα Χάος γενετ',—

That is, 'Chaos was the first thing which was generated'— and consequently there must be some cause prior to Chaos, through which it was produced; for there can be no effect without a cause. Such, however, [171] is the ignorance of the moderns, that in all the editions of Hesiod *γενετο* is translated *fuit*, as if the poet had said that *Chaos was the first of all things*; and he is even accused by Cudworth on his account as leaning to the atheistical system. But the following testimonies clearly prove, that in the opinion of all antiquity *γενετο* was considered as meaning *was generated*, and not *was simply*. And in the first place, this is clearly asserted by Aristotle in lib. 3, De Coelo.<sup>4</sup> "There are certain persons who assert that there is nothing unbegotten, but that all things are generated ... and this is especially the case with the followers of Hesiod." And again, by Sextus Empiricus in his treatise *Adversus Mathematicos* p. 383, edit. Steph. who relates that this very passage was the occasion of Epicurus applying himself to philosophy. For (says he) when Epicurus was yet but a young man, he asked a grammarian, who was reading to him this line of Hesiod, "Chaos of all things was the first produc'd," from what Chaos was generated, if it was the first thing generated. And upon the grammarian replying that it was not his business to teach things of this kind, but was the province of those who are called philosophers. — To those, then, says Epicurus, must I betake myself, since they know the truth of things."

4. P. 288, Oxford Edition.

Simplicius, too, in commenting on the passage above cited from Aristotle, beautifully observes as follows: "Aristotle ranks Hesiod among the first physiologists, because he sings Chaos was first generated. He says, therefore, that Hesiod in a particular manner makes all things to be generated, because that which is first is by him said to be generated. But it is probable that Aristotle calls Orpheus and Musaeus the first physiologists, who assert that all things are generated, [172] except the first. It is, however, evident that those theologians, singing in fabulous strains, meant nothing more by generation than the procession of things from their causes; on which account all of them consider the First Cause as unbegotten. For Hesiod also, when he says that Chaos was first generated, insinuates that there was something prior to Chaos, from which Chaos was produced. For it is always necessary that every thing which is generated should be generated from something. But this likewise is insinuated by Hesiod, that the first cause is above all knowledge and every appellation."<sup>5</sup>

5. Com. De Coelo, p. 251, ed. Karsten.

Though the First Cause or The One itself confers on every thing a proper symbol of his ineffable nature, yet this occult unity or impression is not divine in things subject to generation and decay but in true essences alone, in the number of which rational souls must be ranked. Such of these however as are of a partial nature, and on this account are not the immediate progeny of the First One, do not contain a unity which can be called a god, because they are connected with motion, and are in a certain respect composite essences. But where there is a most true essence, as in separate intellects and celestial souls, the unity of each is a god. And indeed on account of these unities, which are as it were expressive characters of the First Unity, the

essences of the Gods contain all things and extend their providential care to every part of the universe, with unbounded beneficence and immaculate power. But these divine unities are perpetually united to the First One, like rays to light, and lines to a center. They likewise subsist in the most perfect union with each other. For since union in other natures is effected through the power of unity, these divine unities must be much more closely united through [173] their subsisting much nearer to the First and most perfect One. Every divine unity, therefore, though it is neither essence nor obnoxious to essential multitude, yet abides in essence, — or is rather the summit and as it were blossom of essence. And as every thing is established in its proper species through form, and as we derive our being through soul, so every god is a deity from the secret unity which he contains. Hence these divine unities subsist in the Intelligible World and in the essences of the Gods like so many splendid lamps in diaphanous spheres, mingling their rays with an ineffable union, energy and consent. And situated in most admirable order in the vestibule of The Good they occultly signify divine silence and solitary beauty, and perspicuously announce to posterior natures the awful sanctuary of their incomprehensible Cause. -T.

#### IV.

P. 137. Plotinus, (En. IV. 7. 8.), says: "But that thought is not possible, if the soul is a body in any respect or of any kind, may be demonstrated as follows. For if sensation is the soul's perceiving sensible objects by the aid or use of the body, thought cannot be apprehension through the aid of the body, since in that case thought and sensation would be the same. Hence if thought is apprehension without the body, much more is it necessary that the thinking nature should not be body. Further, if sensation is the perception of sensible objects, thought is the perception of intelligible objects. If they are not willing to admit this, they must at least concede that we have thoughts of certain intelligible objects, and apprehensions of things without magnitude (extension). How, therefore, will the soul, if it is a magnitude, think that which is not magnitude, and by its divisible nature think the indivisible? Will it think it by a certain indivisible part of itself? But if [174] this be so, that which thinks will not be a body. For in this case there will be no need of the whole for the contact of thought with its object, since contact by one part will be sufficient. If therefore they admit, which is true, that the primary thoughts are of those things which are entirely free from the body, that is, of absolutes, it is necessary that the nature which thinks, only as being or becoming free from the body, can know them. But if they say that thoughts are of forms inherent in matter, yet these are only apprehended by abstracting them from bodies, and this is the work of intellect. For the abstraction, for instance, of a circle, a triangle, a line, and a point, is not effected in conjunction with flesh, or matter at all. Hence it is requisite that the soul, in a work of this kind, should abstract herself from the body. And it follows therefore that she herself cannot be body. I think, likewise, that beauty and justice are without magnitude, and hence the thought of these is similarly without magnitude. Wherefore, when these approach the soul, she will apprehend them by the indivisible part of herself, and, indivisible themselves, they will abide in her indivisible self. How, moreover, if the soul is body, can temperance, justice, fortitude, and other virtues, which preserve it so far as they are received by it, belong to it?"

Plotinus' refutation of the materialists in this book, *On the Immortality of the Soul*, is final. He strikes out the foundation of every materialistic argument. The whole book

will richly repay a thorough study. Taylor's translation of it appears in his *Select Works of Plotinus*, (London, 1817), which was reprinted in Bonn's Philosophical Library, in 1895. Copious extracts from it, admirably translated by Prof. B. A. G. Fuller, one of the rare students of Plotinus in this country, are published in Dr. Bakewell's excellent *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy*, (New York, 1907). [175]

V.

### **On the Way and Means Whereby the Ascent of the Soul is Effected.**

Alcibiades. But perhaps I did not answer rightly when I declared that I had myself discovered that knowledge.

Socrates. How, then, did you obtain it?

Alcib. I learned it, I think, like others.

Soc. We come again to the same reason. From whom did you learn it?

Alcib. The multitude." ♦ First Alcibiades, p. 315.

Intellectual Discipline (Μαθησις) has a two-fold nature: at one time proceeding from superior to inferior causes — according to which the Demiurgus, in the *Timaeus*, says to the subordinate deities, "learn now what, revealing my will, I declare to you" — at another issuing from a cause externally moving — according to which we are accustomed to designate certain persons as instructors. Between these two progressions of Discipline (mathesis) is arranged Discovery (Ευρεσις), for it is inferior to the psychical knowledge imparted by the divinities, and more perfect than reminiscence, which is external, and derived from other things. Concerning the superior progression of Mathesis, Alcibiades had no notion, except so far as he looked to the science which is essentially existent in us, which was given by the Gods, and according to which he thought that he accurately knew the Just. Coming to Discovery, which is a medium, and is in the soul, likewise a medium, and it having been demonstrated that he had neither investigated nor knew the time of the beginning of his ignorance, — which knowledge it is necessary should preexist investigation, — he now returns to the second progression of Mathesis; and, doubting as to who is a truly scientific instructor of just things, flies to the multitude and the unstable life of the many, and considers this as the leader of the knowledge of just things. [176]

Here therefore Socrates, like a certain Heracles exterminating heads of the Hydra, demonstrates that every multitude is unworthy of belief respecting the knowledge of things just and unjust. This discourse *apparently* seems to contribute but little to the purification of the young man; but if one *accurately* considers it, he will find that it is directed to the same end. Primarily, Alcibiades being ambitious, drew his opinion from the multitude, and about it was filled with astonishment. Socrates therefore shows him (1) that the opinion of the multitude has no authority in the judgment and knowledge of things, and that he whose view is directed to the beautiful ought not to adhere to it; (2) that the multitude is the cause of false opinions, producing in us from our youth depraved imaginations and various passions. Scientific reasoning, therefore,



is necessary in order to give a right direction to that part of us which is perverted by an association with the multitude, to apply a remedy to our passive part, and to purify that which is filled with impurity; for thus we shall become adapted to a recovery of science. (3) Socrates shows that there is in each of us, as he says, a many-headed wild beast, which is analogous to the multitude: for this is what the people is in a city, viz., the various and material form of the soul, which is our lowest part. The present reasoning, therefore, exhorts us to depart from boundless desire, and to lay aside the multitude of life, and our inward people, as not being a judge worthy of belief respecting the nature of things, nor a recipient of any whole science; for nothing irrational is naturally adapted to partake of science, since the inferior part of irrational things, which likewise has multitude in itself, is contentious, and at war with itself. (4) We therefore say that the present reasoning does not think right to admit into a wise and intellectual life an apostacy and flight from [177] the one, together with diversity and all-various division; but indicates that all these should be rejected as foreign from intellect and divine union. For it is requisite to fly from not only external multitude but likewise from that which is in the soul, — nor this alone, but likewise to abandon multitude of every kind.

Beginning therefore from beneath, we must shun the "multitude of men going along in a herd," as the Oracle says, and must neither participate of their lives nor of their opinions. We must fly from the manifold desires which divide us about body, and which impel us to pursue first one external object and then another — at one time irrational pleasures, and at another indefinite and conflicting actions: for these fill us with penitence and evils. We must likewise fly from the senses which are nourished with us, and which deceive our dianoetic part: for they are multiform at different times, are conversant with different sensibles, and assert nothing sane, nothing accurate, as Socrates himself says. We must likewise shun imaginations, because they are figured and divisible, and thus introduce infinite variety, and do not suffer us to return to that which is impartible and immaterial; but, when we are hastening to apprehend an essence of this kind, draw us clown to passive (sensuous) intelligence. We must likewise avoid opinions, for these are various and infinite, tend to that which is external, are mingled with phantasy and sense, and are not free from contrariety; since our opinions likewise contend with each other in the same manner as imaginations with imaginations, and one sense with another. But, flying from all these divisible and various forms of life, we should run back to science, and there collect in union the multitude of theorems, and comprehend all the sciences in one harmonious bond. For there is neither sedition nor contrariety of the sciences with each other; but those which are secondary [178] are subservient to those that are prior, and derive from them their proper principles. At the same time it is requisite here for us to proceed from many sciences to one science — which is unhypothetical and the first<sup>6</sup> — and to extend to this all the others. But after science, and the exercise pertaining to it, we must abandon compositions, divisions, and multiform transitions, and transfer the soul to an intellectual life, and simple intuitions.<sup>7</sup> For science is not the summit of knowledge, but prior to this is intellect. I do not merely mean that intellect which is exempt from soul, but an illumination<sup>8</sup> from thence which is infused into the soul, and concerning which Aristotle says, "that it is intellect by which we know terms,"<sup>9</sup> and Timaeus that "it is ingenerated in nothing else than soul."

6. By this first of sciences is meant the Dialectic of Plato.

7. Intellectual vision is intuitive; and hence intellect, by an immediate projection of its visive power, apprehends the objects of its knowledge. Hence, too, the visive energies of intellect are called by the Platonists νοεραὶ ἐπιβολαί, — *i.e.*, *intellectual intuitions*. -T.

8. This illumination is the summit of the dianoetic part. ♦T.

9. *i.e.*, simple, indemonstrable propositions. -T.

Ascending therefore to this intellect, we must contemplate together with it an intelligible essence; with simple and indivisible intuitions surveying the simple, accurate, and indivisible genera of beings. But, after much-honored intellect, it is necessary to excite the supreme hyparxis or summit of the soul, according to which we are one, and under which the multitude we contain is united. For as by our intellect we participate the divine intellect, so by our unity and as it were the flower of our essence we may participate the First [179] One, the source of union to all things. And by our one we are especially united to the Divine Nature. For the similar is everywhere to be comprehended by the similar, objects of science by science, intelligibles by intellect, and the most unical measures of beings by *the one* of the soul, which is the very summit of our energies. According to this we become divine, flying from all multitude, verging to our own union, becoming one, and energizing uniformly. And Socrates, previously preparing this felicitous life for us, exhorts us not to proceed in any respect to external multitude.

Moreover, we must abandon coordinate (internal) multitude, so that we may thereby reach the flower and hyparxis of our intellect, And thus proceeding according to the gradations of knowledge, you may see the correctness of the Socratic exhortation. But if you desire to likewise consider the admonition according to the objects of knowledge, fly from all sensible things: for they are divulsed from each other, are divisible, and perfectly mutable, and therefore, elude an accurate apprehension. From these, therefore transfer yourself to an incorporeal essence, — for every sensible nature has an adventitious union, and is essentially dissipated, and full of infinity. Hence likewise its good is divisible and adventitious, is distant from itself and discordant, and its hypostasis has a foreign basis. Having therefore ascended thither, and being established among incorporeals, you will behold the psychical order above bodies, self-motive and self energetic, and having its hypostasis in and for itself, but at the same time multiplied, and anticipating in itself a certain representation of an essence divisible about bodies. There likewise you will see an all-various multitude of habitudes of reason, analogies, bonds, wholes, parts, physical circles, a variety of powers, and a perfection neither eternal nor at once wholly stable, but evolved according to [180] time, and subsisting in discursive energies — for such is the nature of soul. After the multitude in souls elevate yourself to intellect, and the intellectual dominions, in order that you may apprehend the union of things, and become a spectator of the nature of intellect. There behold an essence abiding in eternity, a fervid life and sleepless intellection, to which nothing of life is wanting, and which does not need the periods of time for its perfection. When you have surveyed these, and likewise seen how much superior they are to souls, investigate whether there is any multitude in these natures; and if intellect, since it is one is likewise the whole, and since it is uniform is likewise multiform. For it thus subsists. Having, therefore,

learned this, and beheld intellectual multitude, indivisible and united — proceed to another principle, and prior to intellectual essences survey the unities of intellects, and an union exempt from wholes. Here abiding relinquish all multitude, and you will arrive at the fountain of *Good*. You see then that the present reasoning, in exhorting us to fly from the multitude, affords us no small assistance in our ascent; and you further see how it contributes to the perfect salvation<sup>10</sup> of the soul, if we direct our attention to the multitude which pervades through all things. The most beautiful beginning, therefore, of our perfection is the separation of ourselves from external multitude, and from the multitude in the desires of the soul, and in the indefinite motions of opinions.

10. The term *salvation* is not peculiar to the Christian religion, since long before its establishment the Heathens had their *savior Gods*. ♦T.

Hence likewise it is evident that souls do not collect their knowledge from sensibles, nor from things partial and divisible discover the whole and the one, but call forth discipline (μαθησις) from their own nature, [181] and correct the imperfection of phenomena. For it is not right to think that things which have in no respect a real subsistence should be the primary causes of knowledge in the soul; that things which oppose each other, which require the reasonings of the soul, and are ambiguous, should precede science, which has a sameness of subsistence; that things which are variously mutable should be generative of reasons which are established in unity; and that things indefinite should be the causes of definite intelligence. It is not right, therefore, that the truth of things eternal should be received from *the many*, nor the judgment of universals from sensibles, nor a decision respecting what is good from irrational natures; but is requisite that the soul entering within herself should there seek for *the true* and *the good*, and the eternal reasons of things. For the essence of soul is full of these, but they are concealed in the oblivion produced by generation.<sup>11</sup> Hence the soul in searching for truth looks to externals, though she herself essentially contains it and, deserting her own nature, explores the good in things foreign to its nature. Thence, therefore, is produced the beginning of self-knowledge. For if we look to the multitude of men we shall never see the one form of them, because it is overshadowed by the multitude, division, discord, and all-various mutation of its participants; if, however, we convert ourselves to our own essence we shall there survey without trouble the one reason and nature of men. Very properly, therefore, does Socrates separate far from a survey of the multitude the soul which is about to know what man *truly is*, and previous to a speculation of this kind purifies the soul from impeding opinions. For multitude is an impediment to a conversion [182] of the soul to herself, and to a knowledge of the one form of things. Hence in material things variety obscures unity, difference sameness, and dissimilitude similitude; since forms here do not subsist without confusion, nor are the more excellent unmingled with the baser natures. ♦Proclus: *Commentary on the First Alcibiades*, pp. 99-110 Vol. III, ed. Cousin.

11. *Generation* signifies, according to Plato and his best disciples, the whole of a sensible nature. ♦T.

## VI.

The nature of the soul is essentially unical and simple, but while in the sensuous sphere she develops certain temporary characteristics, forms or parts, viz. *Rational*, *Passionate*, and *Appetent*. As Hermeias, in his valuable Commentary on the Phaedrus, truly says, the soul here is moulded into different forms, and therefore the energies of the soul in connection with the body are not the same as when she dwells among intelligibles. Mr. Archer-Hind well expresses this thought in the Introduction to his edition of the Phaedo: "The three εἶδη (forms) of the soul are not different parts or kinds, but only different modes of the soul's activity under different conditions. The two lower εἶδη(forms) are consequent upon the conjunction of soul with matter, and their operation ceases at the separation of soul from matter. Soul as such is simple, she is pure thought; and her action, which is thinking, is simple. But soul immanent in matter has a complex action; she does not lose, at least in the higher organisms, all the faculty of pure thought; but she has another action consequent on her implication with matter: this action we call perception or sensation. The main division is, as we have seen, dual: λογιστικόν (the rational) expressing the action of the soul by herself, αλογον (the irrational) her action through the body. The παθη (passions) belonging to αλογον (the irrational) Plato classifies under the heads of θυμοειδης (the passionate) [183] and επιθυμητικον (the appetent). We see too that the terms of the Timaeus, θειον (divine) and θνητον (mortal), are abundantly justified. Soul is altogether imperishable: but when she enters into relation with body she assumes certain functions which are terminable and which cease when the relation comes to an end. θνητον (mortal) then is the name given to soul acting under certain material conditions; and soul may in that sense admit the appellation, not because she ever ceases to exist *qua* soul, but because she ceases to operate *qua* emotional and appetitive soul. Soul exists in her own essence eternally, in her material relations but for a time."<sup>12</sup>

12. The English equivalents of the Greek words I have inserted, in parentheses.

The celestial or ætherial soul was represented in symbolical writing by the butterfly; an insect which first appears from the egg in the shape of a grub, crawling upon the earth, and feeding upon the leaves of plants. In this state it was aptly made an emblem of man in his earthly form; when the ætherial vigor and activity of the celestial soul, the *divinae particula mentis*, was clogged and encumbered with the material body. In its next state, the grub becoming a chrysalis appeared by its stillness, torpor and insensibility a natural image of death, or the intermediate state between the cessation of the vital functions of the body, and the emancipation of the soul in the funeral pile: and the butterfly, breaking from this torpid chrysalis, and mounting in the air, afforded a no less natural image of the celestial soul bursting from the restraints of matter, and mixing again with its native aether. Like other animal symbols it was by degrees melted into the human form; the original wings only being retained, to mark its meaning. So elegant an allegory would naturally [184] be a favorite subject of art among a refined and ingenious people; and it accordingly appears to have been more diversified and repeated by the Greek sculptors than almost any other which the system of emanations, so favorable to art, could afford. Being, however, a subject more applicable and interesting to individuals than communities, there is no trace of it upon any coin, though it so constantly occurs upon gems. -R. P. Knight; *An Inquiry into the Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*. Sec. 169.

## VII.

— And changing will never be free from toils and transformations until, by following the revolution of the same and the similar within him, he shall vanquish by reason the mob of accretions, tumultous and irrational, adhering to him externally and afterwards from fire, water, air, and earth, and shall return to the form of his first and best condition. -Plato: *Timaeus*, 42 C.

The one salvation of the soul herself, which is extended by the Demiurgus, and which liberates her from the circle of generation, from abundant wandering, and an inefficacious life, is her return to the intellectual form, and a flight from every thing which naturally adheres to us from generation. For it is necessary that the soul, which is hurled like seed into the realms of generation, should lay aside the stubble and bark as it were which she obtained from being disseminated into these fluctuating realms; and that, purifying herself from every thing circumjacent, she should become an intellectual flower and fruit, delighting in an intellectual life instead of doxastic nutriment, and pursuing the uniform and simple energy of the circuit of the Same instead of the abundantly wandering motion of the circuit of the Other, For she contains each of these circles, and two-fold powers. And of her horses one is good, but the other the contrary. And one of these leads her to generation, but the other from generation to *True Being*; [185] the one likewise leads her round the genesiurgic, but the other round the intellectual, circle. For the circuit of the Same and the similar elevates to intellect and an intelligible nature, and to the primary and most excellent habit. But this habit is that according to which the soul being winged governs the whole world, becoming assimilated to the Gods themselves. And this is the universal form of life in the soul, just as that is the partial form when she falls into the last body, and becomes something belonging to an individual instead of belonging to the universe. The middle of these, likewise, is the partial universal when she lives in conjunction with her middle vehicle as a citizen of generation. Dismissing therefore her primary habit which subsists according to an alliance with the whole of generation, and laying aside the irrational nature which connects her with generation, likewise governing her irrational part by reason and leading opinion to intellect, the whole soul will be circularly led to a happy life from the wanderings about the regions of sense, — which life those who are initiated by Orpheus in the Mysteries of Dionysus (Bacchus) and Kore (Proserpine) pray that we may obtain, to

"Cease from the Wheel and breathe again from ill."<sup>13</sup>

13. Orphica: Frag. 226, translated by Miss Harrison, in her *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, p. 592, a book of extraordinary value and interest. The attention of the student of the Orphic dogmas, which are essentially the same with those of Pythagoras and Plato, is specially called to the text and interpretation of the Orphic Tablets, which appear in this work.

Referring to Ixion, Simplicius says, (Com. Arist. De Coelo. p. 168, ed. Karsten), that "Zeus bound him to a wheel so that he revolved unceasingly with it. The fable perhaps indicates that Ixion undertook to acquire for himself a certain social and lofty power — for this form of life is Herean — but, showing himself unworthy of it, by the judgment of Hera he fell into an unreal, material, and turbid form of such a power, which 'the cloud' signifies, he being a turbid and materialistic man. Embracing this phantom Ixion produced a nature (the Centaur) compounded of rational and irrational energies. But he was bound by Zeus the Demiurgus, who distributes every person according to his desert (worth) to the wheel of fate and generation, from which,

according to Orpheus, it is impossible for him to be liberated, unless he has propitiated those Gods whom Zeus appointed to release human souls from the circle of generation, and to recover them from evil."

"The propitiation" of the Gods and the release of the soul follow automatically, so to speak, from repentance, the paying of "the penalty for deeds unrighteous," and purification. [186]

But if our soul necessarily lives well when living according to the circle of the Same, much more must this be the case with the divine souls which the Demiurgus placed in the circle of the Other on account of their abounding in thoughts providential of the sensible world. It is however possible for our soul to live according to the circle of the Same when purified, as Plato says. Purifying virtue, therefore, alone must be called the saviour of souls, since this cuts off and utterly obliterates material natures, and the passions which adhere to us from generation; separates the soul and leads it to intellect; and causes it to leave on earth the garments with which it became invested during its descent. For souls in descending receive from the elements different vehicles, bodies or vestments, aerial, aquatic, and terrestrial; and thus at last enter into this gross bulk. For how, without a medium, could they proceed into this body from immaterial spirits? Hence before they came into this body they possess the irrational life, and its vehicle, which is prepared from the simple elements, and from these they become invested with the mob of accretions (the genesiurgic body), which is so called because it is foreign to the connate vehicle of souls, and is composed of all-various vestments, which burdens souls heavily.

The word *adhering* likewise manifests the external circumposition of such a vehicle, and the colligation to the one nature contained in it; after which this last body, consisting of things dissimilar and multiform, is attached to souls. For how is it possible that the descent should be immediately from a life which governs the whole world to the most partial form of life? For it is not joining like to like to connect at once this particular and indivisible outward man with the universe, but a prior descent into a medium between the two is entirely necessary; which certain animal, but the supplier of the descent does not directly produce the life of a certain man, but prior to this and prior to the generation of an individual it produces the life of universal man. And as the lapse is from that which is incorporeal, according to which the soul lives in conjunction with its celestial vehicle, into body, and a life with body, — so from this the descent is into a genesiurgic body, according to which the soul is in generation; and from this into a terrestrial body, according to which it lives with the testaceous body. Hence before it is surrounded with this last body it is invested with a body which connects it with all generation. And hence it then leaves this body, when it leaves generation. But if this be so, it then received it when it came into generation. It came however into generation prior to its lapse into this last body. Hence prior to this last body it received that vehicle, and retains the latter after the dissolution of the former. It lives therefore in this vehicle through the whole of the genesiurgic period. On this account Plato calls *the adhering mob* the irrational form of life in this vehicle; and not that which adheres to the soul in each of its incarnations, because it is that which circularly invests it from the first. The connascent vehicle or body therefore [188] makes the soul to be mundane; the second vehicle causes it to be a citizen of generation; and the testaceous vehicle makes it to be terrestrial. And as the life of souls is to the whole of generation, and the whole of generation to the world, so are

vehicles to each other. With respect to the circumpositions likewise of the vehicles, one is perpetual and always mundane; another is prior to this outward body and posterior to it — for it is both prior to and subsists posterior to it in generation — and a third is then only, when it lives a certain partial life on the earth. Plato therefore by using the term *adhering*, and by attaching the irrational nature to the soul, according to all its lives, distinguishes this irrational nature from this outward body, and the peculiar life of it. But by adding the words *externally* and *afterwards* he distinguishes it from the connascent vehicle in which the Demiurgus made it to descend. Hence this vehicle, which causes the soul to be a citizen of generation, is a medium between both.

Timæus therefore knew the vehicle of the irrational life, which adheres to us prior to this outward body. For that this irrational and tumultuous mob, which adheres to us from fire, earth, air and water, does not pertain to the first vehicle, is evident. For, again, this must be urged, because some of the interpreters do not fathom the depth of the theory of Plato concerning the psychical vehicles; some of them, indeed, destroying the first vehicle, are compelled to make the soul to be at times out of all body. But others, preserving it, are forced to immortalize the vehicle of the irrational life, — neither of them separating the *connate* from the *adherent* vehicle, the prior from the posterior, and that which was fashioned by the one Demiurgus, from that which was woven to the soul by the many demiurgi, though these are clearly distinguished by Plato. It is evident therefore that this irrational mob is not in the [189] connate vehicle of the soul, into which the Demiurgus caused the soul to enter, for Plato clearly says that "*it adhered to the soul afterwards*." It is likewise manifest that neither is it the life in the testaceous body: for if it was, how is it that he says that the soul in changing its bodies will not be free from toils and transformations until it subdues the tumultuous and irrational mob, which afterwards adhered to it? He says therefore that the soul exchanges one life for another, and that the irrational mob adhered to but is not connate with it. For this would be to change that which is appropriate and allied to it. Hence in each of the lives of the soul there is not a mutation of the irrational life, as there is of bodies. This life therefore is different from the *entelecheia*, which is one in each body, and inseparable from it. For the one is inherent, descending with us into the realms of generation; but the other is changed together with bodies, from which it is inseparable. Hence Timæus knew that the irrational life is different from the life of the first vehicle, and from the life of the last body. It is different from the former, because he calls it *posterior*, and from the latter, because it is not changed in conjunction with the outward body. For it is necessary that the soul should subdue it, when it is present to it. For the soul is separated from the *entelecheia* of the body, and changing its bodies between the life of the ethereal vehicle and the life of the testaceous body it accomplishes the genesiurgic circuit. It is however disturbed by the irrational life. But to the rejection of such vehicles as these, which are mentioned by Plato, who particularly names each of the elements, the philosophic life indeed, as he says, contributes; but in my opinion the telestic art is most efficacious for this purpose, — through divine fire obliterating all the stains arising from generation, as the Oracles teach us, and likewise every thing foreign, which the spirit and the irrational nature of the [190] soul have attracted to themselves. -Proclus: *Commentary on the Timæus*, pp. 296 sq. Vol. III. ed. Diehl.

## VIII.

## Fragments of Ammonias Saccas.

Ammonius Saccas, the famous teacher of Plotinus, lived about 175-250 A.D. He was surnamed Saccas, (σακκας, a sack-bearer), because his first vocation was that of a carrier of goods from the port of Alexandria, Egypt. Theodoret tells us that Ammonius, abandoning the sacks in which he carried grain, embraced the life of a philosopher. His parents were Christians, and he was brought up as a Christian, but when, says Porphyry, "he began to think for himself, and came in contact with philosophy, he straightway changed to the Hellenic faith." According to Hierocles, says Bayle, none but men governed by a spirit of contradiction and an itching desire of disputation, or by their prejudices and the darkness of their minds, found any disagreement between the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle: "some voluntarily giving themselves up to strife and madness, others enslaved by prejudice and ignorance. There were a great number of the first kind of these disputants until at length the wisdom of Ammonius, who was called θεοδιδάκτος (taught by God), illuminated the world. For he, having purified the doctrines of the ancient philosophers, and having removed from each all the useless and trifling incrustations, demonstrated that in all fundamental and necessary dogmas Plato and Aristotle were at one." (Hierocles in the Bibliotheca of Photius, no. 214 p. 171 Vol. I. ed. Bekker). Again: "Many of the nominal followers of Plato and Aristotle wrangled with each other so unscrupulously about the dogmas of their respective masters that they even corrupted<sup>14</sup> the writings of their teachers [191] in order to show the opposition between them. And this disgraceful innovation in philosophical discussions continued until the time of the divinely-taught Ammonius. He, impelled by a divine impulse to search for philosophic truth, despised the opinions of the many who had brought much discredit on philosophy, and entered [192] profoundly into the thought of Plato and Aristotle, thereby perceiving that they were of one and the same mind on all essential points, and imparted a philosophy free from discord and contention to all his auditors, and especially to his best disciples, Plotinus and Origen, and their successors." (Hierocles in the Bibliotheca of Photius, no. 251.) Ammonius taught orally only: he never committed his doctrines to writing. He was a teacher of remarkable genius, ability, and insight, and some of the most gifted men of the age were among his hearers. Plotinus, after attending many philosophic schools with extreme dissatisfaction, when he heard Ammonius discourse exclaimed joyfully, — "this is the man I have been seeking," and became his attentive pupil for eleven years. The teachings of Ammonius were preserved in the works of his disciples, and the record of his lectures. It is probable that many of his auditors made accurate reports or memoranda of his lectures as they were delivered, for their own use and that of their friends. Partial reports of two of his lectures, on the nature of the soul and its union with the body, are preserved by Nemesius in his book, *On the Nature of Man*, (περι φύσεως Ανθρώπου). There is no reason to doubt their authenticity or their faithful transmission to the age of Nemesius, and they are well worthy of the reputation of Ammonius as a great thinker. The following English version of these fragmentary reports, which seem to be complete, however, so far as they go, will doubtless be acceptable to the student of genuine philosophy.<sup>15</sup>

14. This is an interesting historical fact, but it seems to have escaped the notice of the historians of philosophy. In the works of Aristotle there are only a few sentences and passages which apparently contradict the doctrines of Plato, and these may be corruptions of the original text made by the crowd of philosophasters who were intent on



representing him as an opponent of his Master. They of course changed or interpolated the Aristotelian and Platonic text only to the extent that it was necessary to effect their purpose, and they shrewdly made the contradiction of Plato by Aristotle more apparent than otherwise, since this would cause less suspicion, relying on the fact that the ordinary reader or student never penetrates beyond the surface meaning. But these imposters and rascals reckoned without their host in the case of philosophers of insight, like Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Syrianus, etc., who were not prevented by a corrupt text from apprehending the essential harmony of Plato and Aristotle. (It is morally certain that the corruptions were made chiefly in the text of Aristotle, because the writings of Plato had been much more carefully preserved and transmitted, and it was therefore more difficult to change them.) In examining the alleged antagonism of Aristotle to Plato we should always remember that many of the books of Aristotle are lost, and that the text of those which remain is in a more or less imperfect condition. The MSS. of his works, says Prof. Sandys, (*History of Classical Literature*, p. 86 Vol. I.), "after the capture of Athens by Sulla in 86 B. C, were transported from Athens to Rome, where they were consulted by scholars such as Tyrannion, Andronicus, and others; but, owing to long neglect, many of them had become illegible, and the copies made after they had passed into the hands of Apellicon were disfigured with unskilful conjectures and restorations." That "the principal doctrines of Aristotle are conformable to those of Plato, and that he differs from his divine Master in appearance only and not in reality," is conclusively shown by Thomas Taylor, in his elaborate and very valuable *Dissertation on the Philosophy of Aristotle*, (London, 1812), which I heartily commend to all who are interested in this question. See on this point also the rare and valuable work of Stephanus Theupolus, *Academicarum Contemplationum Libri Decem*, (Venet., 1576).

15. For this translation I am indebted to my daughter, Helen M. Johnson, A. M. An English version of Nemesius' work by George Wither, a poet, satirist, and political writer, was published in 1636. His knowledge of Greek was limited, and his ignorance of Philosophy was unlimited. It is said that Sir John Denham went to King Charles II and begged him not to hang Wither, (who was imprisoned and in danger of losing his life), because "whilest G. W. lived he should not be the worst poet in England." [193]

## I.

Bodies, being by their very nature mutable, wholly dissoluble and infinitely divisible, nothing remaining in them which is immutable, need a principle to bring them together, to join them, to bind and hold them in unity, and this principle we call the soul. Now, if the soul is a body of any kind, even if it is the most subtle or refined, what again is that which holds it together? For it has been shown that every body requires a connecting and binding principle to hold it together, and this will be true of every body *ad infinitum*, until we reach an incorporeal principle. If they should say, as the Stoics do, for instance, that there is a certain tense motion in or about bodies, extending at the same time to the internal and external parts of bodies, and that this motion tending outward is the cause of quantities and qualities, and tending inward is the cause of unity and essence, then we must ask them, — since every motion proceeds from some power, what is this power, and in what lies its essence? If this power is a certain matter, we will again use the same arguments. If it is not matter but a material thing — for a material thing is different from matter, since that which participates of matter is called material — what then is that which participates of

matter? Is it matter or something immaterial? If it is matter, how can it be material and not matter?<sup>16</sup> If it is not matter, it is therefore [194] immaterial: if it is immaterial, it is not a body, for every body is material. If they should say that bodies have the three dimensions, and that the soul extending through the whole body likewise has the three dimensions, and is therefore necessarily a body, — we will reply that every body has the three dimensions, but that every thing having the three dimensions is not a body: for quantity and quality, which are incorporeal in their nature, are accidentally capable of increase or diminution, if they are in a thing which has magnitude. And so it is with the soul, which in its essence or nature has no dimensions, but accidentally is considered to have three dimensions by reason of its connection with the body, because *that* has three dimensions. Moreover, every body is moved (acted upon), either from without or from within: but if from without, it will be inanimate; if from within, it will be animate. If the soul is a body, if it is moved from without, it will be inanimate, — if from within, it will be animate. But it is absurd to assert that the soul is both inanimate and animate, and therefore the soul is not a body. Further, the soul if it is nurtured, is nurtured by the incorporeal, for the sciences nurture it; no body is nurtured by the incorporeal, therefore the soul is not a body.

16. The materialists, driven from their position that the soul was matter, alleged that it was a material principle, or a principle inherent in matter. But this opinion is no more tenable than the other. Either this principle is matter, or it is immaterial. If they say that it is matter, they involve themselves in a contradiction, since they have affirmed that the soul is not matter but a material principle, and therefore their argument becomes an absurdity, because it maintains that this material principle is matter — since it must be either matter or immaterial — without being matter. But if this material principle is matter, their opinion is wholly destroyed by the preceding arguments: if, on the contrary, this principle is not matter, it is immaterial; and if it is immaterial, it is not a body. ♦Dehaut.

## II.

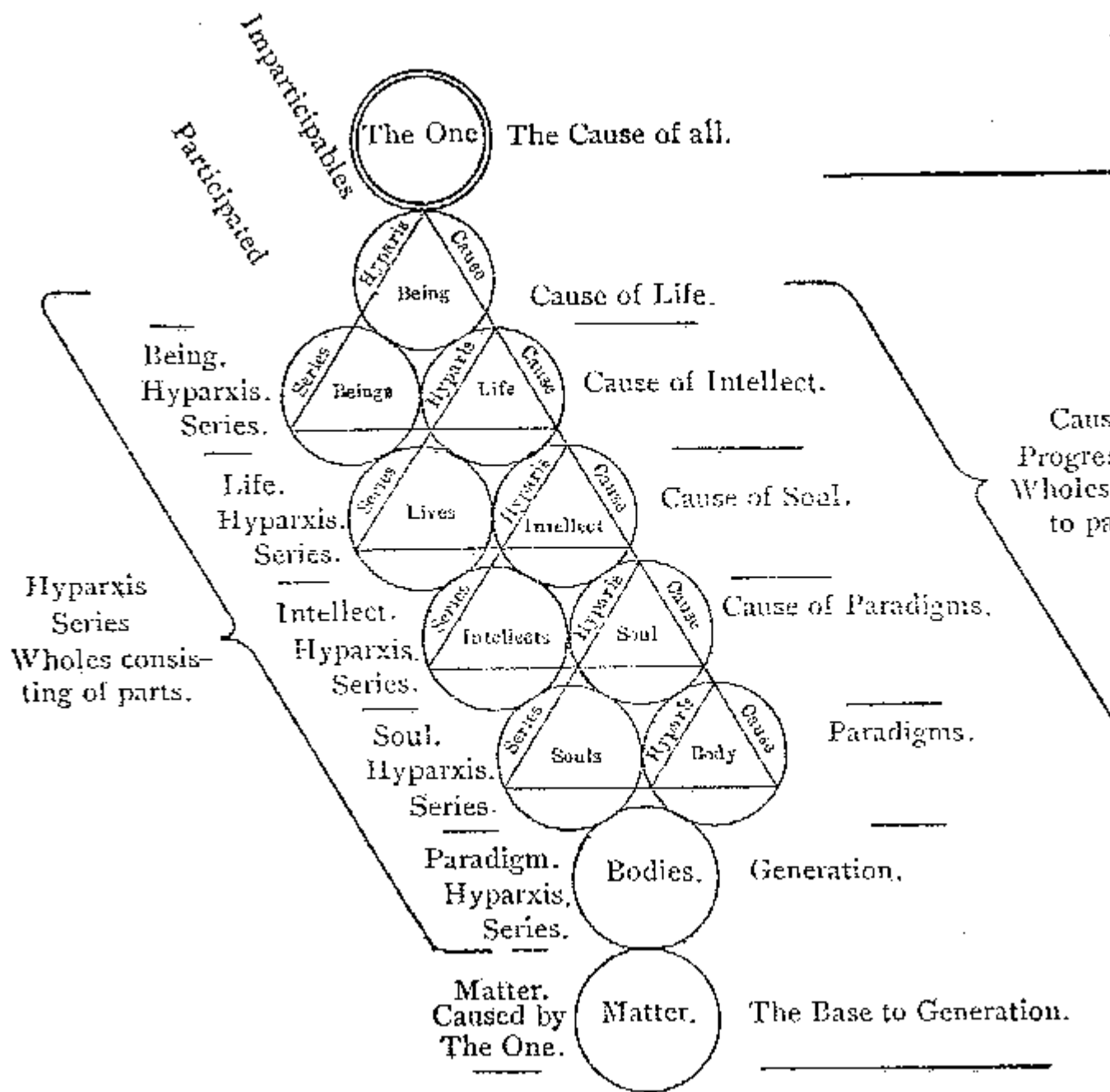
We must now investigate how the union of the soul and an inanimate body arises. Ammonius, the teacher of Plotinus, solved the question in this way.

He said that intelligible things have such a nature [195] that, when they are united to the things which are able to receive them, they are not changed like corruptible things, but remain distinct and indestructible, just like things which are laid side by side. With respect to bodies, union with each other changes them entirely, because they are changed into other bodies, just as the elements are changed into compound bodies, nourishment into blood, blood into flesh and the other parts of the body. As to intelligible natures, union may arise but there is no change of essence as a result: for an intelligible thing by reason of its nature does not change its essence, but it either departs or vanishes into non-existence, but its nature does not admit of change. Nor is it corruptible into non-existence, for in this case it would not be immortal. The soul, being life itself, if it was changed in the mixture or union would be different and no longer life. But what advantage would the soul be to the body, unless it supplied life to it? The soul therefore is not changed essentially in the union. Thus, it having been demonstrated that intelligible natures are immutable in essence, it necessarily follows that they do not perish with the things to which they are united. The soul is intimately

united to the body, but yet remains totally distinct. That it is united to the body, sympathy with the body shows; for the whole animal sympathizes with itself as one being, — that it remains distinct is evident from the fact that in a certain way the soul can withdraw from the body in sleep and, leaving it lying like a corpse, the body only preserving in itself the breath of life, in order that it may not wholly perish, it acts by and of itself in dreams, foretelling the future, and approaching intelligible things. The same thing happens when the soul by and of itself apprehends any intelligible nature: for then as much as possible the soul separates itself from the body, and isolates itself, in order [196] that thereby it may rise to the knowledge of real beings. For being incorporeal it separates itself from the whole body as from things which are wholly corruptible, but yet remains indestructible and distinct and, preserving its own unity, and changing the things wherein it abides by its own life and yet not being changed by them, — just as the Sun by its presence changes the air into light, making it luminous, and the light is united to the air, and yet the Sun at the same time remains distinct and unmingled, — so, in the same way, the soul being united to the body remains absolutely distinct, differing from the Sun, however, in this, that the Sun being a body and circumscribed by place, is not itself everywhere that its light is, and it is the same with fire, for it remains confined in the wood or in a wick as in a certain place. But the soul, being incorporeal and un-circumscribed by place, passes as a whole both through its own light and the whole body wherein it is, and there is no part lighted by it in which it is not totally present: for it is not dominated by the body, but dominates the body. Nor is it in the body as in a jar or bag, but rather the body is in it: for intelligible natures are not hindered by corporeal, but enter, penetrate and pass through every body, and cannot possibly be restrained by corporeal place, — because, since they are intelligible, they are in intelligible places: for they are either in themselves, or in intelligible natures which are above. Thus as the soul is then in itself when it reasons, so it is in intellect when it thinks. And when it is said to be in the body, it is not said to be in the body as if it was in a place, but to be as it were in a certain relation to the body, and to be present to it in such a way as God is said to be present in us. For we say that the soul is bound to the body by a certain relation or habitude, inclination and disposition, as the lover is bound to the object of his love: not corporeally [197] nor locally, but by their relation. For since the soul is an essence without size, magnitude or parts, it is superior to any place circumscribed according to parts. As it has no parts, in what place could it be enclosed? Place is coexistent with magnitude, for place is the boundary of that which contains, inasmuch as it holds that which is contained. If any one should say, then my soul is in Alexandria and in Rome, and every where, he does not notice that he really says "place" again: for the words 'in Alexandria' and 'here and there,' or 'every where,' designate place. But the soul is nowhere in any respect as in a place, but only in a certain relation; for it has been demonstrated that it cannot be enclosed in a place. Whenever therefore an intelligible nature is said to be in relation to some place, or thing which is in a place, we are guilty of an abuse of language in saying that it itself is there, because as a fact only its activity is there, — we assuming the place for the relation and the activity of it. To speak accurately we should say, "it acts there," not that "it is there," [198]

## APPENDIX.

### Prop. XCVII.

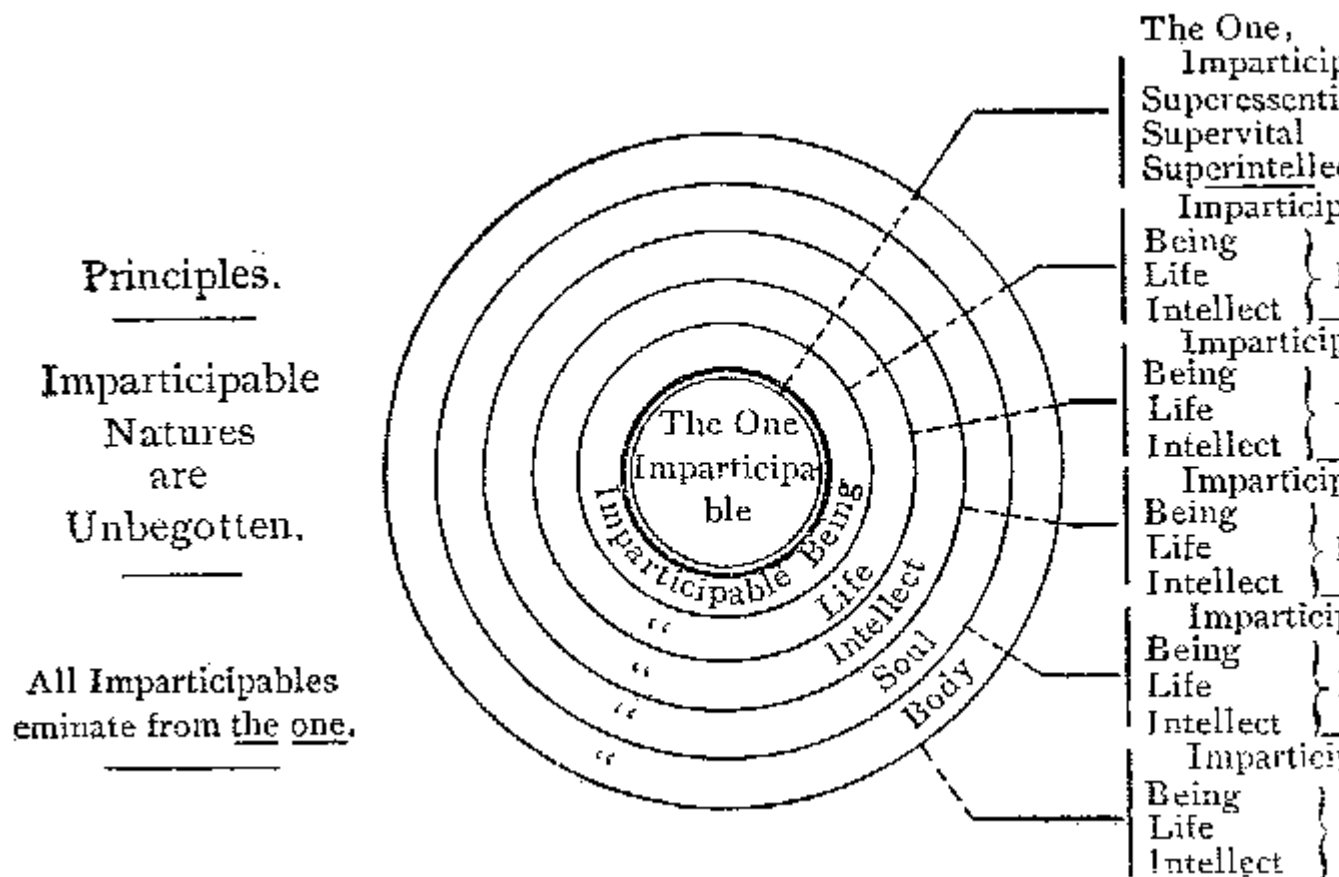


The diagram points to causes giving subsistence to natures in a two-fold manner, viz: the causes according to an order in the progression of causes, and the causes according to an order subsisting in each series or causal chain.

In the four interlacing triangles, each containing three circles, the circle at the apex of the triangle represents a leading cause; the circle at the base, to the right, representing a secondary cause in the order of progression; and the circle to the left represents a secondary order of natures subsisting according to the series. For instance, the upper circle in the upper triangle represents Being. Being is the cause of Life. In the circle to the [199] right, life is represented as in the order of progression. And to the left, the circle represents beings. The series of beings proceed from Being, for Being is the leader in the cause of beings; Life, of lives; Intellect, of intellects: Soul, of souls; Body, of bodies.

The circles at the apex of each triangle represent, (1) causes according to imparticipable natures — (2) causes according to self-subsistent natures — (3) causes according to hyparxis. Natures proceeding from imparticipable causes subsist according to wholes consisting of parts. Natures proceeding in the order of progression subsist according to self-subsistent causes. And natures proceeding according to hyparxis subsist in the series.

**Prop. XCIX.**



Primary causes subsist imparticipably. The One is the primary cause of all things, hence The One is the first imparticipable. The One is truly unbegotten, for there is no other prior, nor beyond. The One is truly the principle of all things, for the multitude subsists secondary to that which primarily subsists in The One.

Of the multitude, some things are first, and with [200] reference to the first of things; others subsist secondary; and, again, others, the last of things. Hence there subsists in the multitude an order of progression. But the principle of this progression subsists primarily in The One. For, as The One is to the multitude, or as the primary is to the secondary, so is that which is first in things, or primary in things, to that which is secondary in the multitude of things. The principle of ratio subsists in a cause which is the same in all ratios, that is, imparticipably. But if the first imparticipable, The One, is unbegotten, then, by reason of one principle, all imparticipables are unbegotten.

**FINIS.**

